THE ANCIENT problem of the presence of good and evil in the same world has been dramatized for our generation in a way not to be shrugged off. Is the simple affirmation of an almighty God of love and of human freedom and fallibility a sufficient answer to the problem?

In this book Dr. Lewis presents his conviction that it is not. Accepting without question the reality of a God of love as well as the fact of human freedom, he points out that it has nevertheless become necessary to recognize the presence and operation of other factors in the universal interplay of good and evil. Existence must be conceived in terms of conflict. Creation is a tragic drama. Over against the fact of creativity is the fact of discreativity, with "non-creativity" as the arena for their opposition. This suggests that some form of "process philosophy" is demanded both by the facts of experience and by the newer scientific theories concerning the structure of the universe.

The conclusions of this thoroughgoing reconsideration of the idea of an Adversary may be attacked but not ignored. Its view that the persistent tradition of a demonic power of destructiveness is not mere mythology but the recognition of an actuality, that the malignant influence of this power is real regardless of the name given to it, must be taken into account by every man who sincerely endeavors to interpret the will and ways of God.

The Author

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THE CREATOR AND THE ADVERSARY

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SET UP, PRINTED, AND BOUND BY THE
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To

The Drew Students

Whom it has been my high privilege through many years
to conduct through "The Graduate Theology Cycle"

FOREWORD

In writing a foreword an author may be allowed to be a little more personal than he would care to be in the main body of his book.

I avail myself of the privilege to say at once, therefore, that I set forth in this book a position in sharp contrast at a crucial point with anything I may have published before. Every man's mind is supposed by some to have its own native philosophical bent. This may be open to question, but I can certainly say that it had always been easy for me to accept the "monistic" point of view in one or another of its forms. Monism, as ordinarily understood, means that the palpable differences, and even the apparent contradictions that characterize the course of events, all bespeak a common ground. Some would call this common ground "the Absolute"; others would call it "God"; others, especially in the Hebrew-Christian tradition, would be more specific, and would call it "the Will of God." In my earlier years I never questioned this general view.

During 1939 the *Christian Century* published a series of articles, written by different men, on the theme "How My Mind Has Changed in This Decade." I was asked to write one of these articles. It appeared in the issue of June 14, under the title "From Philosophy to Revelation." I tried to explain why I had gradually moved away from the attempt made in my early volume *Jesus Christ and the Human Quest* to fit the Christian faith into the type of philosophical monistic idealism which I had learned chiefly through Andrew Seth Pringle-Pattison. I gave as the main reason for the shift a deeper appreciation on my part of the significance of the Scriptures.

Almost inevitably this involved a much more complete acceptance than I had ever known before of both the concept and the fact of revelation. If God had actually disclosed himself, then this self-disclosure must be determinative. It could take orders from no other source. The problem became to ascertain what this self-

disclosure actually was, to distinguish it from its channels of expression, and to expound it in agreement with itself. I made a somewhat cautious attempt to do this in *God and Ourselves* (1931).

Becoming increasingly aware of the spiritual futility of a negative modernism, and of the profound radicalism of revelation, as I had more clearly come to understand it, I expressed myself a few years later much more aggressively in *A Christian Manifesto* (1934). The book met with a reception whose vigor, pro and con, completely surprised me. Concerning this book I wrote as follows in the *Christian Century* article: "If I were rewriting the book today there are some things in it which I should modify, but I am firmly convinced that the book, with all its faults of overemphasis, represents the real meaning of the Christian revelation." In contrast with *Jesus Christ and the Human Quest* it was, I said, "an attempt to take the gospel 'as is,' to expound its amazing and overwhelming content, especially as concerns the personal cost to God of redeeming from the blight of sin the world which of his own sovereign will he had created." I could still repeat the statement, except for a reservation concerning "sovereign will," and the books I have written since follow in general the direction indicated.

It is this reservation that determines much in the present book. While here and there in the Scriptures the complexities of existence appear to be traced to a single source, this is not the meaning of the completed divine self-disclosure. Its meaning, rather, is that the God of holy love has an Adversary with whose opposition he must continually reckon. This opposition is in very much more than the will of man. It goes down to the very roots of existence. This view of revelation has immensely clarified for me the course of events. It plainly demands a philosophy of conflict, whose elements are fundamental and irreconcilable opposites. I still cannot agree with Edgar Sheffield Brightman's explanation of "recalcitrance," but I have become as convinced as he is about its actuality. This actuality must be a Christian postulate: revelation demands it, and experience at every point supports it. Then why not say so, and abandon the attempt to trace directly to the will and purpose of God all the dark evils that attend existence? There is nothing sacred about monism, and to question it is not blasphemy, especially while the memory of the recent universal holocaust still haunts our very dreams. Perhaps the blasphemy is with monism!

I should like to add a protest respecting the all too common supposition that to assent to revelation is to abandon reason. I am not prepared to admit that what is set forth in this book is set forth with no least regard for rational relationships. It is true that the assent to revelation is an act of faith, but it is not therefore a "blind" act. Reason is a faculty of intelligence, but the intelligence is not exhausted by reason. Faith is a faculty of that same intelligence. Where there is no faith, a faculty of intelligence therefore lies unused, and the purpose for which the faculty exists remains unfulfilled. The very procedure followed in this book would seem to me to indicate a regard for rational considerations, and itself to constitute an appeal to the reader's intelligence.

The book will be seen to be free from the ordinary paraphernalia of scholarship. This is deliberate on my part. It is not that I am indifferent to such matters, as will be attested by former books of mine. But what I have written here is very largely of the nature of a *confessio fidei.* It represents the fruitage of many years of reflection on the gospel of Christ and its far-reaching implications, and I preferred to say it with some directness, unencumbered with too many references to what other men may have thought. Only at one point have I indulged myself. For illustrative purposes I have made a somewhat free use in places of literary extracts, especially from some of the greater British poets of the nineteenth century. This is purely a matter of personal taste on my part, for which I can make no other defense. I have to thank the poets not only for many hours of genuine intellectual and spiritual pleasure, but also for insights into the truth of things which is one of my chief reasons for believing in the Holy Spirit. There are times when I am in perfect sympathy with the question put by Arthur Hugh Clough after he contrasted the "broken cisterns" of philosophy with the "bubbling forth" of feeling:

> Why labor at the dull mechanic oar,
> When the fresh breeze is blowing,
> And the strong current flowing,
> Right onward to the Eternal Shore?

The purpose of this book, briefly expressed, is to present an evangelical interpretation of the Christian faith in terms of conflict. Wherever we look we see the opposition of good and evil. The

biblical revelation, which asserts God as personally and sacrificially participating in this conflict through Jesus Christ, carries the manifest implication that the conflict is of God's own choosing only in the sense that it is involved in his purpose. Deeper than the fact of this purpose, however, is the very nature of existence itself, which is such that creation in *any* sense and for *any* purpose would lay upon the Creator the necessity of conflict. The creative process discloses the Adversary, but the Adversary was there already, "couching at the door," awaiting his opportunity. The biblical revelation therefore not only gives the Christian religion a profound congruity with the observed creative processes, but becomes a key to the understanding of them in their relation to a Creator whose nature is holy love. Everywhere God meets an Adversary. The gospel of the Incarnate Son is the final challenge to that Adversary, since it is the means to that "eternal life" which is life beyond the reach of evil. Through great tribulation God has established his Kingdom, and through great tribulation man enters it.

—Edwin Lewis

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Part One

CREATION THROUGH CONFLICT

The Chapters

I. Good and Evil
II. The Spindle of Necessity
III. The Inward Freedom
IV. The Leash and the Lash
V. A Book of Testimony
VI. Religion as Creativity
VII. The Humanist Dilemma

Chapter I. GOOD AND EVIL

THE PRESENCE OF GOOD AND EVIL, BOTH IN THE WORLD ITSELF and in human life and experience, is too self-evident to be denied. The fact constitutes a problem, no matter from what standpoint it is considered. The naturalistic thinker who denies God still has the problem. The naturalistic thinker who attempts to include God within the scope of his conception of "nature" still has it. The thinker who affirms the absolute sovereignty, omnipotence, and goodness of God still has the problem, and perhaps in its most acute and perplexing form, as witness Augustine and John Calvin and Jonathan Edwards. The thinker who supposes some limitation on the sovereignty and power of God eases the force of the problem, but he has not dispensed with it, since any limitation on power or goodness which makes evil possible is itself still an evil.

Ever since men began to think, they were aware of these two sides of existence. In all their contacts with the world, whether they went on a journey, or whether they built a shelter, or whether they established social relations, or whether they sought a livelihood by hunting or tillage or fishing, they have had to reckon with the good and the evil. Whether what they took to be good was really good, or whether what they took to be evil was really evil, is secondary. The fact of the distinction itself is what is important. The presence among many peoples of a tradition of "a golden age" is significant; the present strife-torn world cannot be accepted as final, but must rather be a degeneration. Solon, the Athenian lawgiver, in his travels among the Egyptians heard from a priest the tale of a wonderful island called Atlantis, beyond the gates of Hercules, whose people were once happy and prosperous beyond measure. To match the tale of the Egyptian the Athenians devised a tale of their own remote history, when Hellenic life was all that it should have been, and both tales may be read in Plato's *Critias* (108-12). Nothing less than a great natural calamity could account for the transition from the golden age to the present age

of iron. Even though the transition were slow, by way of the age of silver and the age of brass, the iron age is iron indeed:

> Good days contracted, and enlarged the bad.
> The air with sultry heats began to glow.
> The wings of winds were clogged with ice and snow;
> And shivering mortals into houses driven
> Sought shelter from the inclemency of heaven.

The lines are Ovid's, and their sense may be duplicated from a hundred sources. Even the Genesis narrative contrasts Eden with the world beyond the gates of the cherubim, where flashed the flaming sword to keep intruders out, and of that world it was said, "In toil shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee." Such traditions betray not only a haunting sense on the part of men of the contrast between what can be imagined and what actually is; they betray also a deep-seated nostalgia, "the homesickness of the soul."

On any showing, life is a conflict and the world is a battlefield. "Nothing is stable," declared an ancient philosopher. "What is not stable is not real," declared another. "Existence is compacted of both stability and instability," declared a third, and he was nearer right than the other two, because he realized that one does not see the true whole who ignores some of its parts. One pays an exacting price for attempting to be "a spectator of all time and existence," for he sees good and evil, high and low, joy and sorrow, humiliation and exaltation, in one and the same universe; yes, and in one and the same life. Cosmic benevolence stands in contrast with cosmic malevolence, and while both are focused in greater or lesser degree at any point, nowhere are they focused so unmistakably, so sharply, and so tragically, as in the life of man. It was one of Young's "night thoughts" that "Death loves a shining mark, a signal blow," and the destruction of a shining mark is always an evil. Bacon commented on flies buried in amber as having been honored with "a royal tomb," yet the phrase "a fly in the amber" is still current speech for something which fails of perfection. There is a dead fly in the amber which is the universe, and whose mind is not teased by the fact? That much diversity may spring from a common source and itself make a unity, no one will deny, but to treat thus the contradictions of good and evil is to deny

that they are contradictions. That is too high a price to pay for a seeming unity. The subtle metaphor which pervades Tennyson's "Higher Pantheism" should not mislead us. No pantheism ever can be "high" enough to be acceptable. To suppose that by some mental alchemy we can transmute the actualities of our everyday world into a visionary equation of God is an evasion rather than a solution of the problem. Tennyson writes:

> The sun, the moon, the stars, the seas, the hills and the plains—
> Are not these, O Soul, the Vision of Him who reigns?
>
> Is not the Vision He, tho' He be not that which He seems?
> Dreams are true while they last, and do we not live in dreams?
>
> Earth, these solid stars, this weight of body and limb,
> Are they not sign and symbol of thy division from Him?
>
> . . . . . .
>
> And the ear of man cannot hear, and the eye of man cannot see;
> But if we could see and hear, this Vision—were it not He?

The answer is "No!" What Tennyson wrote in "The Vision of Sin" had in it much less of the visionary and much more of the actuality than was in the dangerous dreaminess of "The Higher Pantheism."

> Dark is the world to thee: thyself art the reason why,
> For is He not all but thou, that hast power to feel, "I am I"?

And again the answer is "No!" If God is all that is not I, what then indeed is God? Let Tennyson himself answer from elsewhere:

> A monster then, a dream,
> A discord. Dragons of the prime,
> That tare each other in their slime,
> Were mellow music match'd with him.

If it were not to escape this dilemma, we should not have the figure of the serpent in Eden, and its analogue in all ancient lore. We should not have the Egyptian contrast of Osiris and Set. We should not have the Parsi contrast of Mazda and Ahriman. We should not have the Hebrew-Jewish contrast of Yahweh and Satan. We should not have the Teutonic contrast of Balder and Loki, nor in Hinduism the contrast of Brahma and Myra, nor,

shall we say, the contrast between the Lamb and the Beast or between the New Jerusalem and Babylon in the book of the Revelation of John.

The question is not simply that of the contrast between so-called matter and spirit; or between soul and body; or between brain and thought; or, as Descartes would say, between "extension" and "consciousness"; or between "the thing" and "the-thing-in-itself" of Immanuel Kant; or between "sensations" and "ideas" of Hume; or between "self" and "object" of Fichte; or between "occasions" and "essences" of Whitehead; or between the *élan vital* and the "resistant" of Bergson; and the like. These are questions which are interesting enough to the metaphysician, the philosopher, and the psychologist, and they can be considered with a certain cool detachment. But there is no desperate urgency about them. They leave the normal course of human experience entirely untouched. Not a thing is changed in respect of his relation to the processes of life by any conclusion a man may arrive at on one or more of these questions. A modern Berkeleyan driving a new automobile in heavy traffic watches the signals—and approaching automobiles—with all the painful concentration of the most uncompromising realist! His idealism makes not the least practical difference to him, any more than did his skepticism to David Hume.

The question of good and evil, on the contrary, is a life and death question. For this is a question of the *meaning* of things. This is a question, even, of destiny; certainly it is a question of everyday human relations, and, let us now say, a question of man and God. Men do not have to be carefully trained in a methodology before they can become aware of this question as of some importance. Rather, it is borne in upon them at every turn they take. Paul says that he fought with wild beasts at Ephesus. That does not mean that he was thrown to the lions in the amphitheater to make an Ephesian holiday, although the *point* would be the same even if that were the meaning. It means that he met an opposition at Ephesus whose ferocity can be suggested only by a startling metaphor such as this.

The oppositions which chiefly hold men's attention, and which enter unmistakably into the very stuff of their experience, are the oppositions that *hurt*. When men meet something which denies what they believe ought to be, or which destroys that which they

love, or which puts a question mark after their hope and confidence, the fact arouses in them very much more than a mere speculative curiosity. What man ever shook his fist in the face of Heaven because he could not decide whether the "thing" preceded the "thought" or whether the "thought" preceded the "thing"? But what man has not been at least tempted to shake his fist in the face of Heaven as he confronted the spectacle of human suffering—especially when it narrowed down to a loved one in his own home? One such man recently cried in his mad desperation; "God, you can do that to me, but you can't do it to my child!" But it was done all the same.

Whatever one may think about the effort of E. S. Brightman at this point, it is an effort directed toward an actuality which presses upon every man every day. Back of the effort is absorption in a concrete fact—evil, sin, pain, suffering, frustration—which grows in sheer immensity the more one insists on the Christian claim that God is love. Better to bring God himself within the orbit of evil—so says Brightman in effect—than put him so entirely outside of that orbit as to make out of evil the sheerest inexplicable irrationality because it can in no wise be related to God. The suggested Brightman solution at least tremendously sharpens the problem just by its emphasis on its poignancy: even God is not beyond the touch of that dire reality which so darkens the lives of men, and even God can escape from it only through a tribulation comparable to that which men also know. The remote, detached, spectator-god of Aristotle brings little enough of help at the point where help is most needed. Coming from one who is essentially a metaphysician, Brightman's conception has a curious touch of the anthropomorphic, but he defends it, properly, by claiming that if we are to conceive God helpfully we must conceive him in a way that makes him intelligible to us, and to make him intelligible to us we must conceive him agreeably to the terms of our own experience.

Thus he writes in *The Problem of God:*

> Of course, the being that originates and controls the universe is far above the human plane, and must have powers and properties of which we know nothing. Yet, if we are not to talk nonsense, we must not ascribe to God any attributes which contradict the best we know. (P. 119.)

And again:

> The evidence for God lies in experience, and we must think God, if we are to think truly, in such manner as to make experience intelligible. (P. 125.)

Brightman's own view is that the dark factors of creation and of human experience are to be regarded as elements within the life of a God who yet in himself is good. This is what he means by his much-discussed phrase "The Given." He writes again:

> God's purpose and his nature must be inferred from the way in which experience reveals them, namely, as being gradually attained through effort, difficulty, and suffering. Hence there is in God's very nature something which makes the effort and pain of life necessary. There is within him, in addition to his reason and his active creative will, a passive element which enters into every one of his conscious states, as sensation, instinct, and impulse enter into ours, and constitutes a problem for him. This element we call The Given. The evils of life and the delays in the attainment of value, in so far as they come from God and not from human freedom, are thus due to his nature, yet not wholly to his deliberate choice. His will and reason acting on The Given produce the world and achieve value in it. (P. 113.)

Many have found it impossible to accept Brightman's conception. The position to be taken here is that what he means by The Given is to be recognized as real enough, but is to be set *over against* God's nature instead of being included in it. What this does for the usual "monistic" view of things is clear enough, but it is yet to be shown that there is anything sacrosanct about a metaphysical monism *just because it is monistic*. In our thinking we are to begin at this end of the line of existence, that is to say, with the things we know about, with the very stuff of the life process, with the facts which are indubitably borne in upon us by our common experience. We may be baffled how to read all this agreeably with our accepted idea of God, but we must at least be true to things as we find them to be. It may be that we shall be hopelessly defeated in our effort to understand, correlate, and interpret, unless God shall in some way disclose himself to us. Even then, when we change our procedure, and seek to read the diversities and contradictions of experience in the light of God as he has

shown himself to be, we shall still be under the same necessity of reading the facts *according to what they actually are.*

Nothing that God can ever tell us about himself can change the fact that in our experience, as in the world about us, there is good and there is evil. Revelation—to introduce the word now—does not mean a cheap and easy optimism. Something we come to believe about God, his nature and his purpose, may make a profound difference in our *attitude* toward the dark and dreadful aspects of our experience, but it will not of itself transform these aspects into something which they otherwise are not. To know, not that God creates the evil but hates it, to know that it rises up against him as it does against us, to know that its conquest is a problem for him as it is for us, to know that it will yield, if it yield at all, not to a gesture of omnipotence but to the steady persistence of suffering love—to know this is not to change anything in the character of the human situation.

Something, nevertheless, is changed. The *approach* to the situation is changed. There is a change in the *resources* available for meeting it. There is a change in the ultimate *expectation.* If there is a Love that will not let men go, despair and pessimism may be done away. If there is the certainty that evil has suffered a fatal blow, incentives to realize the promise in the blow are increased. If God has made clear his own adequacy to the human problem as that is involved in the whole problem of creation itself, then in a personally-felt and personally-maintained relation to such a God will be the secret of victory.

> But now thus saith Jehovah that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel: Fear not, for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name, thou art mine. When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned, neither shall the flame kindle upon thee. (Isa. 43:1-2, A.S.V.)

Is that simply empty rhetoric, or in the correlation of "creator" and "redeemer" is there a suggestion of divine intent and divine achievement and divine availability which justifies human confidence and trust while undergirding human effort and endurance?

Or this:

For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed to us-ward. For the earnest expectation of the creation waiteth for the revealing of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to vanity, not of its own will, but by reason of him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the liberty of the glory of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only so, but ourselves also, who have the first-fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for our adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body. For in hope were we saved: but hope that is seen is not hope: for who hopeth for that which he seeth? But if we hope for that which we see not, then do we with patience wait for it. (Rom. 8:18-25, A.S.V.)

A complete exposition of this great passage is not called for here. All that is at present necessary is to observe its manifest bearing on the issue. Paul is frankly recognizing the character of the arena in which is being accomplished God's purpose with men. The word he uses which is rendered "vanity" could quite properly be rendered "frustration." The life of creation and the life of man alike appear to be at the mercy of something irrational. But the irrationality itself is included in the vast scope of God's purpose. In the very bondage is the promise of deliverance, since the subjection was made "in hope." It is as though the creation is undergoing heavy birth pangs. Life comes by way of pain, and every advance in the quality of life is attended by pain. In respect of that true life which is the heritage of the children of God, there is this same "groaning," this same effort to get itself free, the destined issue of life lived in the flesh. The "adoption" is both the purpose and the crown of the process.

Paul, in other words, is attempting to read the process in the light of its end or purpose. But he can do that only as he knows the purpose. This purpose he has already stated: to produce "heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ." (Rom. 8:14-17.)

But this in no wise means that Paul is unaware of the tragedy of the process. Only one thing can lighten the tragedy: its possible outcome. No one can read the Epistle to the Romans and suppose that Paul makes light of "the sufferings of this present time." He does not doubt the actuality of the Adversary. How he conceives the Adversary is not at present the question, but his use of such

terms as "law," "flesh," "sin," "death," and the like, is not without significance here. "When we were in the flesh, the sinful passions, which were through the law, wrought in our members to bring forth fruit unto death." (Rom. 7:5, A.S.V.) It is quite clear that "flesh" here does not mean simply the body, any more than "death" here means simply the cessation of bodily life. Paul is thinking of something sinister which may come into control of men, with such devastating results as he describes elsewhere in this epistle, especially in 1:24-32. Hence, "I know that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing." (7:18, A.S.V.) And again: "The mind of the flesh is death; but the mind of the Spirit is life and peace: because the mind of the flesh is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can it be: and they that are in the flesh cannot please God." (8:6-7, A.S.V.)

What is this dark power that not only is at enmity with God, but that also comes into control of men, *whether men will or not?* For Paul also writes:

> The evil which I would not, that I practice. But if what I would not, that I do, it is no more I that do it, but sin which dwelleth in me. . . . I delight in the law of God after the inward man: but I see a different law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity under the law of sin which is in my members. Wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me? (Rom. 7:19-24, A.S.V.)

This is nothing more than the recognition of a fundamental dualism at the very center of human personality. Irrespective of the side to which he gives his own free consent, a man is the seat of a crucial conflict. He does not himself create that conflict, he finds it already in existence in him. It is relative to the fact of that fundamental conflict that Paul sees the whole significance of "Christ and him crucified." For to the question "Who shall deliver me out of the body of this death?" he has but one answer: "I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord." (Rom. 7:25, A.S.V.)

Nor does Paul limit his consideration to what might be called the strictly moral aspects of the problem. The clue he has found applies to "all things," as in the amazing declaration: "With them that love him, God works in all things for their good." (Rom. 8:28.) This does not destroy Paul's sympathy for the distressed and sorrowing, any more than his own deliverance from "the law

of the flesh" destroys his sympathy for those not yet delivered. He still has experience of "afflictions," "distresses," "stripes," "tumults," "dishonor," "evil report," "chastisement," "poverty" (II Cor. 6:4-10.) He still has experience of "perils" of all kinds, of "hunger," of "thirst," of "cold," of "nakedness" (11:23-27.) He still has "a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to buffet me" (12:7.) The illumination and deliverance that have come to Paul, by virtue of what we may now call his "faith in the revelation," have not changed the constituent elements of experience. The world is still a place where evils abound. The inner conflict has not ceased. Pain and sorrow still befall him. Nevertheless he has the secret of victory: "Smitten down, yet not destroyed." (4:9.)

Much that is to be said later will be under the influence of these considerations. The necessity of a divine self-disclosure will be affirmed, and the reasons for our believing that we have it will be set forth. But the revelation will not be accepted in order to get rid of a problem. The consideration of the human situation, and of the factors that manifestly enter into it, must be *utterly and uncompromisingly realistic*. Nothing is to be gained by "smoothing down the rugged text to ears polite." The actuality of the kingdom of evil stands over against the actuality of the kingdom of good. There is much evil that can be traced to no human will or intent, just as there is much good that can be traced to no human will or intent. That there is purposed and willed evil is self-evident, and it is just as self-evident that there is purposed and willed good. But good and evil have more than a human reference: they have a cosmic reference. They pertain to the very structure of created existence as we know it. There are aspects of them which appear purely fortuitous; there are other aspects which are unmistakably deliberate and purposive.

If there is a Creator, there is as certainly an Adversary. By dismissing the Creator we may also manage to dismiss the Adversary —and then we shall have to invent something which will look suspiciously like their equivalent. By dismissing the Adversary and still keeping the Creator, we ease the metaphysical problem which necessarily goes with the conception of the Adversary, but we are then baffled as to how to conceive the Creator.

We need light, and we need it desperately, never more so than in a day like this. We have seen what evil can do, and we have

turned our face away from it in sheer horror. To attribute it all to man's "free will" seems the sheerest fantasy, involved in it though man's "free will" undeniably is. It is true that we have also seen what good can do, but why there should have to be such a manifestation of evil as the condition to a manifestation of good—this is just one more aspect of the problem, and an aspect that still further deepens it. Cannot the earth bring forth its fruits unless it be "dunged with rotting death"? The metaphor is Francis Thompson's, and it has endless ramifications.

Our need for light is desperate. Is it anywhere met? We believe that it is. We believe, or better we may believe, that the God who said, "Light shall shine out of darkness," and thereupon creation, compacted of light and darkness, came to be, again caused the light to shine, and the knowledge of his own glory was given in the appearing of Jesus Christ. And for what purpose? For the *complete* overcoming of the darkness, that darkness which is the source of all evil and which is the Adversary alike of the Creator and of the creation.

Good and evil! Light and darkness! Flesh and spirit! Creator and Adversary! Travail and new life! They appear to be mutualities. The one is because of the other. Which is the initiating power? Which is the dominant power? If they are in necessary balance, we have no hope in the world. If the creativity is the finality, then the discreativity may come into subjection, and if it may come into subjection, then it may be seen to subserve the purposes of creativity. It is as the creative becomes also the redemptive that the discreative is laid on the altar which seemed to hold the creative.

Can it be that a cross is much more than the symbol of a faith? Can it be that a cross is also the symbol of cosmic process? Can it be that it is more even than that? Can it be that a cross is the symbol of metaphysical structure, of metaphysical necessity, of metaphysical law? In a word, can it be that the Christian faith, that God disclosed himself within the life of the race in an Act of utter self-giving, the form of which was the Man Christ Jesus—can it be that this faith, and the Act which is its focus, is the inevitable outcome of the whole movement of existence as this arises out of the impact of creativity and discreativity, of light and darkness, of good and evil, of God and the Adversary?

The mind staggers under the weight of such a thought. But if

the thought is more than a thought, if it be, as well, the absolute truth, then while the conflict must still continue, while men and God alike must still tread the winepress, the conflict has a *point*, the treading has an *end*. We are no longer as Tantalus, or as Sisyphus, or as Tityus. The water we desire to quench our thirst will not always evade us; the huge stone we must roll will not forever slip back; the creatures from the pit will not forever torment us.

God the Creator, incarnate in his own Son who was the Man Christ Jesus, is greater than his Adversary. He can outsuffer him; he can outendure him; he can outplan him. For he can love and he can love even unto death, and the Adversary, whose weapons are vanity and frustration and corruption and sin and death, cannot do that. Love is repulsed only to return. So said Shelley, who, lover of all things Greek as he was, saw in Prometheus a prediction of another Conqueror, who would tread "the thorns of death and shame," and bring to heel "Hell, Sin, and Slavery," and blazon across heaven itself the cross that promises "the world's great age" and the return of "the golden years." Inspired by the same prophetic figure, this symbol of the power of Goodness and Love to wreck the forces of evil and hate, Shelley could write again:

> Love, from its awful throne of patient power
> In the wise heart, from the last giddy hour
> Of dead endurance, from the slippery steep
> And narrow verge of crag-like agony, springs
> And folds over the world its healing wings.

Patiently to suffer, magnanimously to forgive, unweariedly to love, unceasingly to hope "till hope creates from its own wreck the thing it contemplates," and to falter not in the endurance—"this is alone Life, Joy, Empire, and Victory." Actually, of course, Shelley was a long way from comprehending the full sweep of the Christian faith. Jesus Christ was much more than another Prometheus, and what he challenged was far other than "Heaven's despotism." Rather, he challenged in the name of Heaven, and at the behest of Heaven, the dark forces that were Heaven's antithesis.

It is this that we have to understand. It is this whose full measure we have to take. It is this which dramatizes the conflict of which every man knows himself the center, and which he sees being carried on in whichever direction he looks. For it means that the con-

flict in which man is involved is as surely the conflict in which God is involved. That man is involved in it is undeniable. That God is involved in it is a faith. The ground of that faith is in Jesus Christ being taken as God's own self-disclosure within the very heart of our race, and in this self-disclosure being taken as the completion and fulfillment of lesser and preparatory forms of the self-disclosure which came "of old time . . . unto the fathers in the prophets by divers portions and in divers manners." (Heb. 1:1, A.S.V.)

The first man is of the earth:
The second man is of heaven.
We bear the image of the earthy:
We shall bear the image of the heavenly.
O grave, where is thy victory?
O death, where is thy sting?
The sting of death is sin,
The power of sin is the law.
Thanks be to God, for it is he
Who through Jesus Christ our Lord
Giveth us the victory!

Chapter II. THE SPINDLE OF NECESSITY

THE CONFLICT IN WHICH MEN FIND THEMSELVES INVOLVED IS OF the very essence of their existence. This remains a fact irrespective of any theory we may have as to what makes it so. Whether we say with the evolutionist that it is implicit in the very nature of the process by which men have come and with which they are inescapably integrated, or whether we say with Augustine, and those who follow in his tradition, that it is all the result of a primal sin, the fruit of man's first disobedience as respects the tree

> whose mortal taste
> Brought death into the world, and all our woe,
> With loss of Eden, till one greater Man
> Restore us, and regain the blissful seat

—whichever it is, the situation is still as we know it to be. A measure of necessitatedness holds every man in its grip, and whatever may be said about human freedom must be said with that fact constantly in mind.

Plato, in the *Republic*, worked out in great detail his conception of the ideal state. It represented a condition of desirable human life here and now. Yet Plato always saw life here and now as part of a larger whole. It reached backwards into an indiscernible past and forward into an inescapable future. This linkage of part with part is what gave a vast solemnity to the whole.

It was therefore fitting that he should close the *Republic* with the tale or "myth" of Er the Pamphylian. According to the tale, Er was a Pamphylian who was killed in battle. Several days passed before his body could be recovered and set with fitting rites on the funeral pyre. While his body still lay on the pyre, Er returned to life again, and he told what he had seen in the other world.

He came with others, he said, to an open place where judges were seated. Below the place were two openings which led into the underworld. Above were two openings which led into the

upper regions. Souls were sent through the lower or the upper opening as the judges determined. They were to return at the end of a thousand years to report their experiences and for a new judgment. Er heard many of these reports as he tarried in the open place, and some were very wonderful and others were very dreadful.

In due time Er was sent through the opening into the upper regions. He soon found himself contemplating from within the very structure of the universe and the ordering of human life. He learned that the heavens revolve around a great pole or spindle. The pole is the center of a number of spheres of varying dimensions. These are the determinants of the planets. On each sphere is a siren, and the singing of the sirens makes "the music of the spheres." The goddess Necessity guards the spindle. She is attended by her three daughters, and these also sing. They are Lachesis, who sings of the past, Clotho, who sings of the present, and Atropos, who sings of the future.

Er observed what happened. On the knees of Lachesis were arranged a group of lots, and samples of the various sorts of human life. The lots were thrown without apparent design among the assembled souls. Each took the lot that fell nearest to him. The numbers were then called in turn. He who had the first lot was given first choice of the sample lives spread out before him. He was compelled to make a choice, but he was free as to which life he chose. "Choose wisely," cried a voice, "for you choose your destiny."

Er noticed, however, that in general the souls chose according to what had been the habit of their earthly life. The swift-footed Atalanta happened to be there, and when her lot was called she chose the life of a great athlete. The jester Thersites was in the group, and he chose the life of an ape. The last lot to be called was that of Ulysses, but he, remembering his many wanderings, chose the life of a man who lived quietly at home.

When the choices were made, the souls were bidden to go to Clotho, who spun a web around them which united the soul and its choice, and then to Atropos, who fastened the web so that the two could never again be separated. Thence the souls were sent through the burning plain of Oblivion, which was crossed by the river of Negligence, of which they eagerly drank, and some drank too

much. All fell asleep and were awakened by thunder and earthquake. The storm heralded their birth into the world where the life they had chosen was to be lived. *They had forgotten what they had chosen; but what they had chosen would inevitably make them what they would be.*

Matthew Arnold, in the poem "Self-Deception," caught and expressed exactly the spirit of the "tale," except perhaps for his too much emphasis on the pessimism:

> Ah, whose hand that day through Heaven guided
> Man's new spirit, since it was not we?
> Ah, who sway'd our choice, and who decided
> What our gifts, and what our wants should be?

It is easy to read too much into Plato's "tale," and to make it more deterministic than he intended it to be. But that he meant the tale to illustrate his conviction that man's life is set within a framework of necessitatedness is undeniable. The fact that the souls were bidden to "choose wisely," and the character of the choice made by Ulysses, would suggest that Plato was making a place for freedom, but it was freedom hedged about with necessity. The spindle, the distaff, the web, the articulation of life and choice—these are significant of a vast and ordered process from which a man may not extricate himself.

The modern view of things is in many ways utterly different from that of Plato. We know the story of life as he never could know it. Yet it is startling to observe the accuracy of his *insights*. Those insights are not only not invalidated by modern science: they are amazingly confirmed by it. "To exist is to stand in relations," said Lotze, and what are relations but the means whereby the part is brought under the sweep of the movement of the whole, and the means whereby that movement is affected by the part? Relationship means reciprocity.

Our creaturehood may seem but a thing of gossamer, but an absolutism underlies it. Something has determined that we shall be human beings: that is, that we shall be as we are. It has not determined what we shall *do* with what we are, but it has determined the *fact* of our being and the *fundamentals* of our being. Once we are human, we have the choices and the possibilities which go with being human, but we cannot choose or do or be beyond the orbit

of our humanity. The roots of our existence are in a necessitated and necessitating movement whose remorseless logic would appal us if it were not that we so rarely think of it.

We have only to ponder for a little while to realize how undeniable are the evidences to that absolutism which underlies and characterizes our creaturehood. No man could have been born except when he was; had he been born at another time he would have been a different man. He could have had no other ancestry than the ancestry he had; a different ancestry would have meant that he too was different. A significant change anywhere in the long line by which he came would have meant a significant change in *him*—which is to say that this particular man that he now is would not have existed at all. There might have been *another* man, but another man would not have been *this* man. To say, "You could only be *you*" is a truism, but to attempt to take the measure of this truism is simply to be overwhelmed. If he may be referred to once more, Arnold, in *Empedocles on Etna* (in the so-called "Lyric Stanzas"), expresses the thought with his usual precision:

> Limits we did not set
> Condition all we do;
> Born into life we are, and life must be our mould.
>
> Born into life!—man grows
> Forth from his parents' stem,
> And blends their blood, as those
> Of theirs are blent in them;
> So each new man strikes root into a far fore-time.
>
> Born into life!—we bring
> A bias with us here,
> And, when here, each new thing
> Affects us we come near;
> *To tunes we did not call our being must keep chime.*

The large element of *necessitatedness* that is here suggested cannot be denied. We come from a past we did not make, and we bear its indelible marks. I am I; you are you. I can never be anybody else but myself; you can never be anybody else but yourself. From one point of view I am unchangeable, impenetrable, indestructible. If I must "accept the universe," much more must I accept myself. Some vast invisibility fructified in a certain way and at a certain

point, and the result was a human being—*this* human being, I. That fructifying has occurred and will yet occur in more ways than can be numbered, yet while the result is always a human being, bearing fundamental similarities to all other human beings, there can never be exact duplication. *A created lonely absolute*—this is a human being. Similarities there are, but no identities; mutualities there are, but no mergings. William James used to say that every one of us dichotomizes the universe at a different point: I—and all else. But we can do that only because existence itself has already undergone a dichotomy, and *I* am what has been cut off, or at least set off—Browning's "pin point rock."

In actual fact, by what long and slow processes we came to be as we are, is now, so we claim, a matter of general knowledge. A modern schoolboy could teach Aristotle many things! In respect of the question before us, however, whether we came by the fiat of a creative Will, or by the mechanical operation of impersonal and unmeaning forces, makes no difference. Creatureliness stands, let the rest be what it may. The question of method will make a difference later, when it becomes necessary to consider whether, among many possible patterns, there is one pattern which, through all individual variations, every man's life is *meant* to follow. For if there is any meaning in life itself, it will be difficult to resist the conclusion that there is meaning in the whole process whereby the life came to be.

But whatever we may eventually say about this cannot change the basic fact that we are determined as to how we are. If it be so that God did not make us in his own image, because there is no God in whose image we could have been made; if, instead, we are but the unintended spawning of the womb of Time, grown heavy by a means never to be known nor even surmised—whichever it is, we are as we are, and no other. To what depths of pessimism one may be led who sees this, and only this, let Swinburne be the witness. In one of his choruses in *Atalanta in Calydon* he is describing the life of man. He writes in part:

> Before the beginning of years,
> There came to the making of man
> Time, with a gift of tears;
> Grief, with a glass that ran;

Pleasure, with pain for leaven;
  Summer, with flowers that fell;
Remembrance fallen from heaven,
  And madness risen from hell;
Strength without hands to smite;
  Love that endures for a breath;
Night, the shadow of light,
  And life, the shadow of death.

The chorus itself is Swinburne's attempt to set science to music. In almost every line there is an allusion to something we have learned about the process of the making of man. It is the unnecessary sadness of what is implied that appalls us. We may and must face the facts as courageously as Swinburne ever did. Man *was* made as he is, and he only knows it afterwards—and he may *rave* against the fact, or he may set himself to follow it through. And if he does follow it through, a light may shine.

Most people today would confess that man conceived as the result of a movement indescribably long and complex is more understandable than man conceived as the result of a sudden primal creative act. Not only is it more understandable: it is also more impressive. For it means that man is inextricably involved in the whole vast web of existence. In the modern view he is the focal point of the universal travail. If we accept the claim of universal relatedness and interdependence, then we suppose that *every* thing is required to account for any *one* thing. There are places where one would need to go cautiously in the application of this principle. It would seem to exclude the appearance of a novelty, and give us existence on the Spinozistic pattern.

I the grain and the furrow,
  The plough-cloven clod
And the ploughshare drawn thorough,
  The germ and the sod,
The deed and the doer, the seed and the sower,
  The dust which is God.

The novelty we must have if we are to keep freedom. Our creaturehood is basic, but it is a creaturehood of a peculiar kind because it is related to a law which may or may not be observed. This means freedom, of which more later. But one does not need to deny this even in assenting to the claim that if one thing is to be as it is,

countless other things must be as they are. The conception is audacious enough: the mind staggers before it. Yet it marvelously illuminates existence. "All things cohere." When we relate these "all things" to human life, the result is to throw human life into still greater prominence. All paths lead to man, the universal heir.

Evolutionary science was once held to involve the degradation of man. Grant Allen, himself an exponent of that science, said that man now appears as simply "a fungoid growth." That day has gone. A truer view sees man as the point to which all else contributes, fulfilling its end by the contribution, and assuring thereby its own immortality. Browning said it: "In the core of one pearl all the shade and the shine of the sea." And in the mystery of one man's life the mystery of all the rest of existence lies incarnate, and the result is a mystery deeper still.

So "the stars exist to make me possible." Some there be who will say that such a statement is pure undiluted arrogance, one more example of the sheer conceit of "the forked radish with head fantastically carved." Then let us be accommodating, and say instead: "I exist because the stars do. The whirl of the planets has reference to me. The pounding hammers of ancient cosmic strife threw off the sparks whence my life has come. Huge monsters, dragging their slow length through primeval slime, assured that I at last should come to be. Within the earth, which was to be my home, were being stored, by condensations and transformations inconceivable, and by upheavals whose vast involvements leave the imagination impotent, the conditions necessary to my existence. When at last I was here, I consummated the story of life. The fish of the sea, and the bird of the air, and the beast of the field—they came, they lived, they suffered, they died, and made me possible."

When we examine this "me," resultant of a process almost infinitely prolonged, what do we find? We find what is ordinarily called a "nature," but a nature to be qualified by the term "human." This "human nature" is like nothing else in the world. Everything, in particular every living thing, has, as we say, its own "nature," which means nothing more than that the thing is the way it is, and must be the way it is to be that thing. It is impossible to change the nature without destroying that which has it. The higher the scale of existence we consider, the more significant this fact becomes. No form of existence, inorganic, organic, conscious, self-conscious,

can choose either its existence or its form. All a man can do about the fact that he is a man is to recognize that it is so. He accepts himself, as he must, but he still has not *accounted for* himself.

The modern man may attempt to account for some of his more distinctive qualities, but the very effort to account for them involves their use! What shall we say of memory, of imagination, of the deductive power, and of the numerous other aspects of man's time-binding and time-transcending mentality? To consider them we must use them; we can never get outside one of these powers and regard it with complete objectivity. They are powers which are "given" with our very nature. Because we are human, these are our marks, our capacities, our *differentia*. We have them because, being human, we *must* have them to be human. This is not merely talking in a circle: it is drawing attention to certain elements in a man's life which are absolutes. Numerous instincts, capacities, impulses, desires, "necessary ideas" (Kant), "necessary interests" (Hocking), meet in him, helping to constitute his "nature," and he can but wonderingly admit that such is the case.

The physical characteristics express an equal necessity. There is a peculiar and close correspondence between the psychic life and the bodily equipment. The story of human physical ancestry is at the same time the story of the human psychical ancestry. It is at least conceivable that a radical difference at some point in the physical line would have involved a radical change in the human bodily structure, with a corresponding change in the relevant psychical capacities. The radical change obviously did not occur, which is only a way of saying that the human physical and psychical equipment is the determined consequent of its own antecedents. This much of determinism it is difficult, if not impossible, to deny. I am, so to speak, laid upon myself whether or no, and this necessitated I is freighted with a destiny which is, considered as destiny, inescapable. The quality of the destiny I have some freedom to determine, but I cannot determine whether or not to have a destiny. Having come to be, I can no more escape having a destiny than I can escape being in existence. If those are right who say that human physiology is the realized logic of animal physiology, how much more is the total man the realized logic of that vaster movement which is Nature itself!

Social necessities go with the human equipment. The *range* of

the sociality may be greater or lesser, but nothing can change its actuality, and what other things come to pass because of it baffles even the imagination to exhaust. The experiences which issue from the necessary articulation of life with life are what chiefly give to the life its significance, a fact which invests with tragedy a blunder or a misfortune at the point of this articulation. Yet that there shall be the articulation is implicit in the human heritage. One cannot be human and not be under all that goes with it. He is predestined to joy and sorrow, to the knowledge of good and to the knowledge of evil, because these are the attendants of sociality, and sociality is inseparable from human nature.

The many tender relationships which illustrate and express this sociality may become the occasions of unassuageable grief. It was such facts as these that fed the dark genius of Thomas Hardy, and they have haunted men of every class and clime. How different, under less malign circumstances, might have been the outcome of Margaret's love for Faust! Is not a maiden meant for love? Does not all her being cry aloud for love? Is it not in the very nature of her that she shall love? Yet of the love of Margaret came not joy and peace and content, but woe unutterable—her mother's death, her brother's murder, her destruction of her own babe, her sentence, her sad dementia. And if at the last moment, on her refusal to escape from the dungeon and rejoin Faust, the voice from above which cried, "She is saved!" was right—still, she was saved only "as by fire." Where is the tragedy of King Lear chiefly rooted if not in the fact of his fatherhood? And what is fatherhood but a man's natural right, the fulfillment of the nature which came to him with the gift of life? Lear's fundamental urges come to expression; daughters come into his life; they add to his social reach, but eventually do their best to wreck it. The words spoken by the old king to Goneril on the heath during the raging storm are loaded with tragic significance when they are contrasted with filial piety as it might have been:

> We'll no more meet, no more see one another:
> But yet thou art my flesh, my blood, my daughter;
> Or rather a disease that's in my flesh,
> Which I must needs call mine: thou art a boil,
> A plague-sore, an embossed carbuncle,
> In my corrupted blood.

It must needs be that life tie itself in with life, and in that very necessity, while there is promise of deepest joy, there is always the threat of heart-rending tragedy. In the ancient Persian legend of Sohrab and Rustum, son and father as they were, but the son not knowing who his father was, and the father not knowing who his son was, the two meet in single combat on the field of battle. The father, Rustum, fatally wounds his son, and in the last dying moments the two discover their relationship. Even in Greek tragedy, there is nothing more poignant:

> So, on the bloody sand, Sohrab lay dead;
> And the great Rustum drew his horseman's cloak
> Down o'er his face, and sate by his dead son.
> As those black granite pillars, once high-reared
> By Jemshid in Persepolis, to bear
> His house, now 'mid their broken flights of steps,
> Lie prone, enormous, down the mountain side:
> So, in the sand, lay Rustum by his son.

Social relationships are inescapable by man. Whether or no, he must sow the seeds of them—"But what shall the harvest be?" Lachesis and Clotho and Atropos will have something to say about that.

Of all the necessary happenings involved in man's creaturehood, the most inexorable is the fact of death. The destiny to be born is also the destiny to die. How can he claim to be his own, who determines neither the time of his coming nor the manner of his being nor the time of his going? The unanswerable rebuke to man's pride, and to his boasted self-sufficiency, and to his temptation to assert his greatness and his independence, is in the fact of his inescapable mortality. Edward Young's concise line says it exactly: "Man's make incloses the sure seeds of death." Death is an ancient order, says Francis Thompson, and the vows men take to enter it are unspoken, but no man ever lived who was offered a choice about entering the order. The vows may be "tongueless," but they are none the less compulsory. Socrates was enabled to face death with complete equanimity, an equanimity never experienced by Jesus, whose hesitation was due to the sole fact that he saw the deeper significance of death as it was never seen by the Athenian examiner. "This is going to be a great experience," said Arthur James Balfour, as the last moment drew near, but the har-

bingers of death had already hovered around him for weary weeks and months. Whitman's sentiment, "Nothing can happen more beautiful than death," can be true from only one standpoint, and there is no evidence that Whitman shared it. Death cannot be isolated from its concomitants, and the degree to which the sheerly evil enters into them is not to be ignored in any estimate of the human significance of death. Montgomery saw this:

> 'Tis not the whole of life to live,
> Nor all of death to die.

Browning could write as he did in "Prospice" because he had a hope, but he nowhere suggests that the hope transforms death into the "lovely" and "soothing" and "serene" and "delicate" fact that Whitman could take it to be. Browning fully recognized the fact that he must pass "the post of the foe," where "he stands, the Arch Fear in a visible form," and where he will be halted to pay

> life's arrears
> Of pain, darkness, and cold,

a "black minute" indeed, and perchance to be followed by a blackness deeper still. In sober fact, the overpowering description of Death written by Milton in the second book of *Paradise Lost* is far closer to the normal human feeling concerning death than the numerous efforts of myopic minds to conceive death as a beautiful angel, aurora-crowned. Milton puts Death at the threefold gates of hell, and nearby is Sin, both alike the monstrous progeny of Satan. He describes Sin first:

> The one seem'd woman to the waist, and fair,
> But ended foul in many a scaly fold,
> Voluminous and vast, a serpent arm'd
> With mortal sting. About her middle round
> A cry of Hell-hounds never ceasing bark'd
> With wide Cerberean mouths, full loud, and rung
> A hideous peal, yet, when they list, would creep,
> If aught disturb'd their noise, into her womb,
> And kennel there; yet there still bark'd and howl'd
> Within unseen.

No less dreadful is the description of Death, a vague and indistinguishable shape that yet was shapeless:

Black it stood as Night,
Fierce as ten Furies, terrible as Hell,
And shook a dreadful dart.

Satan is the sire alike of Sin and Death, but Death becomes lustfully enamoured of Sin, who must endure his horrendous embraces,

Engendering with me, of that rape begot
These yelling monsters, that with ceaseless cry
Surround me, as thou saw'st, hourly conceived
And hourly born, with sorrow infinite
To me.

So complains Sin to Satan, who addresses her as "dear daughter," and reveals to her and to Death his purpose to make his way to earth, where was a new race of "upstart creatures," destined to take his own lost place in heaven. He had designs against these creatures, which he did not doubt he could fulfill. To accomplish it he would need the help of Sin and Death, who would then have ease enough in place of their present terrors, and should

up and down unseen
Wing silently the buxom air, imbalm'd
With odours; there ye shall be fed and filled
Immeasurably; *all things shall be your prey.*

Something must be allowed to the opulent imagination of Milton, and to his unequaled command of audacious metaphor. But with that allowed, it is still true to say that Milton sees in death a certain abnormality, a form of necessity articulated with the numerous ills that afflict mankind, and representing with them an element of anarchy which makes an ideal order impossible. It is said that Lincoln frequently repeated the lines from the "Mortality" of William Knox:

O why should the spirit of mortal be proud?
Like a fast-flittering meteor, a fast-flying cloud,
A flash of the lightning, a break of the wave,
He passes from life to his rest in the grave.

One can well believe it. As one ponders the grave face of Lincoln, especially as seen in profile from the right side, it can hardly be doubted that for his great soul life often enough became "a meditation of death."

That there is another side to the story is obvious. Death plays an indispensable part in the economy of life. The very postulate of evolution is mortality. It is only as what is produced perishes that more and better can be produced. Life marches forward on steppingstones which are memorials whose builder is death. If there is to be that march, there must be those memorials. Life springs from life through death. To that extent death is vindicated by the life it helps to make possible. Man can be at all only as he is creaturely, and creatureliness is possible only through the action of necessity, and if birth comes through necessity, no less does death.

Which is to say that there is a necessitatedness of evil. If the fundamental evil is in the fact that if there is to be created good it is only as there is also discreative evil, then the necessity of death is simply an aspect of that fundamental evil. Even if it be necessary that evil be done that good may come, evil is no less evil in subserving the purposes of good. And even if it be necessary that death destroy that life may freshly create, this necessity is still an evil thing. A better way of fulfilling life's purposes is still conceivable, and if this better way be not possible—*as it is not*—then this way is but a second best; and a situation that precludes the best conceivable, and makes a second best necessary, is a situation on which is the taint of evil—*of necessary evil!*

To begin to live is to have become the issue of great fixities. To continue in existence is still to be under the domination of great fixities. To anticipate the future, under whatever form, is to anticipate the fruitage of great fixities. Creatureliness means subjection. Man's creatureliness, in comparison with creatureliness of any other kind, has its own distinctive marks, but these marks are still evidences of the fixities. He carries in his very essence an inexpugnable *must*. His life is woven of the spindle of Necessity. This is not a complete account of him, but in any account of him that claims to be complete this must be included and the measure of its vast significance must be taken. The "tale" of Er the Pamphylian was not sheer fantasy. A hand not our own casts the lot. A power not our own determines the possible number of lives open to us. None the less, there is a Voice that says, "Choose!" but always there is the consideration that the very choice itself, once made, is caught up into the web of necessity.

For every man is under necessity to exist in the form he does.

Every man is under necessity to choose according to what is presented to him. Every man is under necessity to live at a certain time and place, so that the courses open to him from which he must choose are so many contingencies, because dependents of his time and place. And every man is under necessity to become increasingly the embodiment of his own choices.

There are seeds of necessity and there are seeds of freedom, but the harvest of the seeds of freedom is under the same sequential law as the harvest of the seeds of necessity. The price exacted for the gift of human life is the necessity to choose, and the price exacted for the necessity to choose is that the chooser becomes what he chooses. The web spins, spins unceasingly, and from entanglement in the web no soul may escape.

Chapter III. THE INWARD FREEDOM

CREATURELINESS IS SPUN OF THE WEB OF NECESSITY, BUT CREATURELINESS is of different "kinds." On any showing, man is a creature, and he is servitor to his own creatureliness. But every other living thing is a creature too; it has its own "given" nature; it has its own fixed conditions; it has its own type of experience; it has its own limiting necessities. The differences, however, are undeniable. While we may properly speak of Nature as one, within the one whole of Nature there are many separate "natures." The recognition of "Kinds" is an ancient recognition. Differences of "kind" are in effect differences of "nature." We speak of plant nature, insect nature, fish nature, reptile nature, bird nature, animal nature. Aristotle made some famous suggestions as to the classification of "kinds," and he had no such hesitation as some moderns have respecting man as himself, notwithstanding his articulation with all living things, "a Real Kind."

Just because man is a "kind" of his own, much is true of him which is true of nothing else. In common with every other "kind," his existence is a conflict. An enemy waits on him at every turn, but the enemy takes a form with man which is determined by a quality in man himself. Always where there is creativity there is an answering discreativity. The essence of discreativity is destruction, but how destruction will operate will depend upon what is to be destroyed. This consideration has the largest significance as we reflect upon the conflict in which man's nature compels him to participate.

Man is therefore a creature, always—but not "just a creature," if by that is meant that he is simply one more of "the brute beasts that perish." That he must perish as the brutes perish is true enough: the skeins of necessity there hold him fast. But he may perish in a way in which no brute may perish, just as he may triumph in a way in which no brute may triumph. So creature as he is, he knows it, and no other creature knows that of itself. He

has come by a long and devious route, as have all other "kinds," and he is the fixed outcome of the process, but he alone knows something of the route. He, like all things else, is set around with limitations, and he carries limitations within him, but he is aware of them and of their possible meaning for his life, as no other "kind" is. Some of his limitations are transformable into opportunities and challenges which he has the power to accept or to ignore, *according to an imperative which he carries deep within himself*, and no other "kind" is endowed with such a power.

In this power is the essence of *freedom.* Necessity has brought into existence a creature who through necessity can come to a freedom, a meaning, a value, which is necessity's final vindication. What would otherwise be bonds becomes wings.

Man's creatureliness herein finds its distinctive significance. He must not only engage in a conflict as all creatures must—a conflict against an ever-threatening Adversary—but he must engage in this conflict at a point which is nowhere else duplicated in the whole range of created existence. All this because of his possession of a unique quality. The very fact of this quality makes it impossible that he shall be "explained" by exactly the same process which is invoked to explain all other and lesser "kinds." What explains man will suffice to explain the rest of creatures, but what suffices to explain the rest of creatures will not explain man. In one crucial regard he has no equal, which makes it reasonable—some would say inevitable—that whatever may be his cause and purpose must be conceived commensurately with this unique fact.

We begin to surmise that man's creaturehood is not merely consummatory of a process but also anticipatory of a destiny, a destiny concerning which we may say either that it requires him to be exactly as he finds he is, or that, because he is this way, the destiny becomes possible. Whether the destiny predetermines his nature, or whether his nature determines his destiny, the close correlation of the two remains. Man is a certain kind of creature because of the action of a vast necessitatedness, but in the kind of creature which he finds himself to be is resident the possibility of his becoming *a product of freedom.* Such a product is literally "a new creation." Like every other creation, it "comes out of great tribulation." It involves the impact of creativity and discreativity. At no point is the presence and action of the Adversary more apparent than at

that point where the freedom that inheres in man's nature is seeking to enter into its birthright. If the necessitated creature man is the realized logic of all creaturely process, then in the realization of that intellectual, moral, and spiritual stature of which freedom is the promise, the logic of the creaturely process is lifted to a new level. In the truly free man cosmic necessity and creaturely bondage find their sufficient explanation and their more than sufficient justification. We think again of the great stanza in Coleridge's "Dejection: An Ode":

> O Lady! we receive but what we give,
> And in our life alone does Nature live:
> Ours is her wedding garment, ours her shroud!
> And would we aught behold, of higher worth,
> Than that inanimate cold world allowed
> To the poor loveless ever-anxious crowd,
> Ah! from the soul itself must issue forth
> A light, a glory, a fair luminous cloud
> Enveloping the earth—
> And from the soul itself must there be sent
> A sweet and potent voice, of its own birth,
> Of all sweet sounds the life and element!

In one sense this is Coleridge's expression of his profound philosophical creed, but it is entirely compatible with the truth that is now being urged, namely, that it is not until an elemental quality of freedom, which is intrinsic in man's very being, has blossomed and fulfilled itself in a new kind of creativity, that "the inanimate cold word" of impersonal and necessary law has found completion. In the case of man, his nature and his destiny find their linkage through his freedom and through his use of it. Hence the exhortation of Edward Young: "Think deeply then, O man, how great thou art!"

The push from behind, and the push from round about—these are always operative. No living thing can escape them. But man has *inwardness* besides history and externality, and it is by virtue of this inwardness that he can modify the action upon him of the history and the externality. He is not completely the victim of what has been and of what now is. He can consider, he can evaluate, he can judge, he can decide, he can choose. He can do this with reference to an area of reality of which he alone is aware.

It is the area in which are operative considerations of high and low, right and wrong, good and bad. He both creates this area and is conscious of a pressure arising from it. It is a pressure therefore engendered of the total stuff of his creaturehood. What is crucial is the fact that the pressure may be resisted or it may be yielded to. He can find ample reasons for both the resistance and the surrender. But the final decision, whether to yield or whether to resist, must be his alone. If man be sprung only from the dust of the earth, therefore, he is a paradox indeed! It belongs to him to arrive at an issue which, considered relative to his alleged origin, invests the originating dust with the attributes of living spirit!

Freedom to choose: this is manifestly what confronts us. It becomes a fair surmise that in the fact and character and range of choices lies the key to the mystery of human creaturehood. Not in the bare fact of choice alone. It would be difficult to deny a degree of choice to at least the higher forms of animal life. It is the *range* of the choices, the *character* of the choices, the increasing *difficulty* of the choices, the *outcome* of the choices, that give human freedom its dread significance, one could almost say its appalling significance.

All the great analysts of the soul have been arrested by what is implied here. The conditions of failure and triumph are already within man, and it is his lot to grapple with them, to decide, to choose. Thus Amiel wrote in his *Private Journal* on December 13, 1858:

> Salvation lies in abandoning the evil self in principle and in taking refuge with the other, the divine self, in accepting, with courage and prayer, the task of living with one's own demon, and making it into a less and less rebellious instrument of good. The Abel in us must labor for the salvation of the Cain. To undertake it is to be converted, and this conversion must be repeated day by day. Abel only redeems and touches Cain by exercising him constantly in good works. To do right is in one sense an act of violence; it is suffering, expiation, a cross, for it means the conquest and enslavement of self.

And again on July 17, 1859:

> Always and everywhere salvation is torture, deliverance means death, and peace lies in sacrifice. If we would win our pardon, we must kiss the fiery crucifix. Life is a series of agonies, a Calvary, which we can only climb on bruised and aching knees. . . . What we have to

recognize is that each of us carries within himself his own executioner —his demon, his hell, his sin.

Amiel means that the soul lives or dies according to something in itself, and which it shall be must be *chosen.*

Man, then, is a creature to whom it belongs to visualize something better, to recognize in that better an imperative, and to decide and act with reference to it. Impersonal evolution which issues in creaturehood becomes supplemented by a quality in one of the creatures of which the issue is society, morals, religion, art, culture, in a word, all the complex life, character, and experience of man. This complex life may have in it many of the characteristics of the jungle, and precisely for the reason that the discreativity which is everywhere manifest in the jungle is also operative in the complex life of man, but it is operative there in new ways *because it has new forms of creativity against which to array itself.* That which leads to redness in tooth and claw in the jungle gives in the life of man a redness of far deeper hue; or it may, on the contrary, issue in a splendor of character and dignity of soul which comes only of free spirit at the death-grapple with unfree circumstance. It is Wordsworth who reminds us that man must be a "warrior," and that he may be a "happy" one. Such a warrior will be "the generous Spirit" who hears and obeys a high commanding voice,

> Whose high endeavors are an inward light
> That makes the path before him always bright:
> Who, with a natural instinct to discern
> What knowledge can perform, is diligent to learn;
> Abides by this resolve, and stops not there,
> But makes his moral being his prime care;
> Who, doomed to go in company with Pain,
> And Fear, and Bloodshed, miserable train!
> Turns his necessity to glorious gain;
> In face of these doth exercise a power
> Which is our human nature's highest dower;
> Controls them and subdues, transmutes, bereaves
> Of their bad influence, and their good receives:
> By objects which might force the soul to abate
> Her feeling, rendered more compassionate;
> Is placable—because occasions rise
> So often that demand such sacrifice;
> More skilful in self-knowledge, even more pure,
> As tempted more; more able to endure,

As more exposed to suffering and distress;
Thence, also, more alive to tenderness.

This is far from saying everything that needs to be said, but what is here said cannot be omitted in the final accout of human nature, its capacities, its impulses, its achievements.

There is, in fact, another side to the picture. *Corruptio optimi pessima.* Any good may be made into a bad, and that is corruption indeed. When the power to stand against evil is transmuted into an assent to evil, the very power that tips the balance partakes of the evil it perferred and chose. The same feet may sink ever deeper in the mire or may scale the heights under the incentive of a trumpeted "Excelsior!" Man is tied back indubitably to many a bloody struggle in that arena of nature wherein discreativity and creativity were the antagonists. He is the epitome of the contestants. They fought and bled and died, and of their blood he came. But he is more than just their offspring, for he can fight as they never fought, he has weapons they never had, he hears a challenge they never heard, he can fail as they never failed, he can achieve as they never achieved. For he can be sinner—or saint!

All this because a simple visibility though this creature man is, he is yet the center of a world of invisibilities which set his measure as it is set for nothing else. The physical man is but the linkage between a subjective inwardness and an objective unseen which imply and demand each other. In one aspect of him he falls under the scope of the natural sciences: physics, physiology, chemistry, biology. In another aspect of him, that aspect by virtue of which he is the creator of these very sciences, he eludes and transcends the sciences which he creates. *Man in his totality cannot be subsumed under any categorical scheme.* He builds himself a cage, and he cannot confine himself to it. His "soul's immensity" stops at no arbitrary barrier. His greatest benediction is in that which most disturbs him:

Those obstinate questionings
Of sense and outward things,
Fallings from us, vanishings;
Black misgivings of a Creature
Moving about in worlds not realized,
High instincts before which our mortal Nature
Did tremble like a guilty Thing surprised.

For these Wordsworth says he would raise his "song of thanks and praise"; yes, and

> For those first affections,
> Those shadowy recollections,
> Which, be they what they may,
> Are yet the fountain-light of all our day,
> Are yet a master-light of all our seeing;
> Uphold us, cherish, and have power to make
> Our noisy years seem moments in the being
> Of the Eternal Silence: truths that wake
> To perish never;
> Which neither listlessness, nor mad endeavor,
> Nor Man nor Boy,
> Nor all that is at enmity with joy,
> Can utterly abolish or destroy!"

What man fails to feel his heart leap up at such an account? It speaks to something in him. It discloses the area where he knows he is free—free to defy, free to yield. It warns him of where his greatest battles are to be fought—in the deep recesses of his own "within." It makes him aware of what a crown he may gain or lose. He cannot but agree that he is set in a context of intangibilities, and whether they are of his own creating or whether they are only of his discovering, the context may grow ever richer, if he will have it so; and if he will not have it so, he still cannot escape its presence, and he still cannot but see himself in the light of it. He stands at the point where necessity, history, and actuality meet possibility, and the possibility is born both of something within his own free spirit and of something which he cannot doubt is other and greater than that free spirit and utterly relevant to it. *The demand upon him is to actualize the possibility.* Yet for every impulse to do so, and for every desire to do so, he knows he may become aware of an impulse not to do so and of a desire not to do so. What is this but the Garden of Eden story again? What is this but the lurking Serpent whose one end is to induce disobedience, because in disobedience is death! So Amiel wrote again on April 5, 1877: "Perpetual conflict, interrupted by short and threatened truces—there is a true picture of our human condition."

Clearly there is much more to a man than can be detected by the ordinary means of perception and judgment. He lives in the same

world as any other creature; he is surrounded by the same objectivities; he is integrated with the same interacting system. And yet there is that in him which brings it to pass that in his relation to that world of objectivities he all the time is building up a new world—a universe of idea, of conviction, of value, of hope, of aspiration—which in its turn determines how he shall regard and use the world of objectivities. He will treat the outer *that*, whatever it may be, according to the inner *this*, and the inner *this* always requires of him a choice. How can the cruciality of his freedom be more eloquently and convincingly bespoken? Yet this freely-created and all-determining universe of inwardness, for which a man must battle constantly, remains always out of sight. It carries a strange and mysterious elusiveness. Who can discern its locus? What microscope can bring it to light? What chemical analysis can disclose it? All we know is that it is inseparable from the man; indeed, in a profound sense, it *is* the man. There, organic to that man, whose roots go back to the primeval slime, is a form of reality which exists *only because he does*. Destroy *him*, and you destroy it. You may not destroy its *reference*—that other universe of value and of reality to which this inwardness is the response and the evidence—but you have destroyed the only means whereby it can become concrete and specific. It is through the human that the more-than-human Word, Idea, Truth, Reality, becomes flesh and enters into the warp and woof of creation.

Only in one way can the inner choice disclose itself—in the *character* of the chooser. Only in one way can the character disclose itself—in *action*. It is by action expressing character that choice makes its impact upon the world. But choice betokens inward decision, often enough inward conflict. The crucial battles are the battles that are waged within. Until truth and goodness have conquered falsehood and evil in the inner life of men, they will win no great conquests in the outer life of the world. The discreative would destroy the creative in the broad arena of social and political life, but its strategy is indirect. It would accomplish this more obvious destruction by destruction in the less observable arena—the arena of men's souls. The citadel of the Adversary is always within. The antecedent of significant action directed to either the good of men or their injury is always decision. What said "The Faultless Painter," Andrea del Sarto, confessing to his

wife the reason he had fallen so far short of what he might have done? He said:

> Incentives come from the soul's self;
> The rest avail not.

It is said of Moses that he endured as one who saw the invisible. On what other basis could he have endured? To endure one thing is to withstand another. Endurance is not pure passivity: it is activity at its highest reach. "He that endureth to the end shall be saved," just because, by his endurance, he has outlasted and outwitted the Adversary. The visibilities have been brought under the domination of the invisibilities. Is not this what takes place every time a responsible human being is led to exclaim: "Here I stand: I can do no other!"

The creature of whom such things are to be said is not much to look at. He is, to quote the satire again, but "a forked radish with a head fantastically carved"! Strip him naked, and the animal world yields more impressive figures. A glibly-spoken magical phrase suffices to account for him: "organic evolution." He holds to existence by a thread. A clot of blood, a whiff of gas, an infinitesimal germ can send him to be blown about the desert dust. "Poor splendid wings"—and often enough the wings are not too splendid. Yet the man's name may be Isaiah, Plato, Paul; it may be Euclid, Bacon, Galileo; it may be Michelangelo, da Vinci, Christopher Wren; it may be Chatterton, Keats, Joyce Kilmer; it may be Mendelssohn, Shaftesbury, William Booth. Now what? When you take this frail man, and contrast what you can see of him with what you cannot see of him, you know, and everyone knows, that what you cannot see, *but which you know is indubitably there*, is infinitely more the essential man than what you can see. Those insights and awarenesses; those hopes and fears; those titanic inner struggles which may or may not leave any visible marks; those siren voices that no storm can quite drown, and whose promises hide a dreadful threat; those vows and purposes; those prayers and visions; those recollections and imaginations—all this actuality of which this frail earth-sprung and earth-bound figure is the center, which leads him to do as he has done, and to desire for others what he has desired, and to carry through his sacrificial

endeavors against a thousand considerations of calculated prudence and self-regard—what now will you say of *that?*

Through his bondage he has found his freedom. The lot was given to him whether or no, but the choice was his own. He stood where he elected to stand. Necessity produced an offspring that defied Necessity and thereby justified it. The category of necessity is therefore something less than universal. Somewhere in the long struggle which is the history of creation, free spirit was insinuated into the process. This free spirit was the fittest to survive, but it had to prove its fitness. It had to struggle against a new kind of hostility because it represented a new kind of value. The discreative is active where the creative is most active. Where else can the creative be more active than in free spirit? Where else is more at stake? Where else is victory more desirable? Where else is defeat more devastating?

Is there a Creator at all? Perhaps not, but *if there is*, where has he more travailed than in the creation of the free spirit of man? Is there an Adversary at all? Perhaps not, but *if there is*, where will he be more active, more subtle, more unpredictable, more determined to meet creativity by his own characteristic discreativity, than in the arena of this same free spirit? The problem of good and evil is not ultimately the problem of the framework of necessity within which the spirit of man finds itself set, and to that extent bound. The problem of good and evil is ultimately the problem of that circumscribed spirit seen as a center of choice. The act of choice and the range of choices are constituents of the chooser. The choice for or the choice against is always the choice of something in himself. But the choice never stands alone. It enters into the texture of the web being ever woven on the spindle of Necessity.

Thus it stands written:

> Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth unto his own flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth unto the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap eternal life. And let us not be weary in well-doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not. (Gal. 6:7-9, A.S.V.)

Chapter IV. THE LEASH AND THE LASH

THE TERMS "CREATIVITY" AND "DISCREATIVITY" OCCUR A NUMBER of times in what has been written above. A sharper consideration of their significance will be undertaken in due time. It must suffice to say at present that they are used to describe two perfectly obvious aspects of existence. Something good is forever coming to be, and something is forever seeking to prevent it. Anything that stands in the way of good is evil. Creativity is good in itself, and good in what it seeks. Discreativity is evil in itself, and evil in what it seeks. The discreative can function only where the creative is already functioning. If we regard creativity as bespeaking a Creator, then we may regard discreativity as bespeaking his Adversary. Or, if the personal terms are objected to as not inevitable, we may at least say that creativity connotes the divine and that discreativity connotes the demonic. Conflict is therefore of the very nature of existence.

We have described man as an issue of this conflict, but an issue of a distinctive kind. The conflict he must wage is relevant to his nature. In him life has reached the level of inwardness, where necessity provides an arena for freedom. He must not only, in common with all other life, carry on a conflict with externality; he must carry on a conflict that is peculiar to himself, the conflict with internality. In such a conflict, creativity and discreativity are involved as they are nowhere else. Creativity may here gain its highest victory, or it may here incur its gravest defeat. Where the divine is most manifest, there the demonic is most active.

This is the situation which has given rise to the theological idea of "natural depravity" or "original sin." It is unfortunate that these terms have been compelled to carry an exaggerated meaning such as has compelled great numbers of intelligent people to turn away from them altogether. The terms, however, stand for something that is real enough. They mean that a man is handicapped in the inner conflict he must inevitably wage, and that the handi-

cap is of the nature of the case. The fact that a conscious willing of the good calls for a self-discipline not required in the conscious willing of the evil is the simple evidence to what Kant described as "a radical defect in human nature."

The coming of man marked at one and the same time the supreme victory of the creative power over the discreative power in the realm of the organic, and the supreme opportunity of the discreative power to frustrate the creative power in the moral and spiritual realm. A defeat may be incurred or a victory may be achieved in the area of human life which has nowhere else a parallel. This applies equally to the divine and to the demonic. Every lesser battlefield of cosmic history did but pave the way for the immensely more crucial battlefield which is the life of man. Whatever victories were won by creativity *there* must be made final *here*.

Creativity is good both in itself and in what it seeks. But it is not until good becomes conscious good and evil conscious evil that their full significance can appear. And they can become conscious only when life becomes conscious of them. It is man's burden to make this possible. In him the conflict of good and evil rises to a new level just because he is aware of the conflict. Especially is he aware of it as taking place within himself and as consisting of choice between value and disvalue. It is this that gives the conflict its moral meaning. Indeed, the "good" that is involved takes on here the definite quality of *righteousness*, and the "evil" that is involved takes on here the definite quality of *sin*. All life, at least at the animate level, reveals preferences and contends for them. The preferences are relative to the "nature" of the life. The range of selectivity increases as life itself rises in the scale. Every organism wants what it wants, and the want arises from within its own mysterious depths. It will struggle against anything that keeps it away from what it wants. In man life takes on a quality which profoundly affects the preferences. Not only so, but the preferences cease to be automatic, for the very preferences are in conflict. Man appears as a creature of contrary preferences, among which he presides as arbiter.

Thus as life becomes more free, preferences become more significant, decisions become more hazardous, creativity has more to lose, discreativity has more to destroy. The familiar Old Testa-

ment stories of Jacob selling his birthright and Daniel refusing to sell his, exactly illustrate the situation. A man is the focal point of two contraries, and he feels the pull of each. Respecting the same possibility of action, he both would and would not. He is fascinated, and he would flee. He is, says Francis Thompson, like the planets in their relation to the sun, subject at once to the centrifugal and the centripetal. Thompson writes in "Orient Ode":

> Thou as a lion roar'st, O Sun,
> Upon thy satellites' vexèd heels;
> Before thy terrible hunt thy planets run;
> Each in his frighted orbit wheels;
> Each flies through inassuageable chase,
> Since the hunt o' the world begun,
> The puissant approaches of thy face,
> And yet thy radiant leash he feels.
> Since the hunt o' the world begun,
> Lashed with terror, leashed with longing,
> . . . . . .
> Thy rein they love, and thy rebuke they shun.

There is that in man which makes him susceptible to a *mysterium fascinans et tremendum*, to use the phrase made familiar by Rudolf Otto. His judgments of right and wrong get their significance from this fact. It is not simply that he hears two contrary voices, each seemingly a part of himself, but that there will be *something to settle* according as he heeds one or the other. He is leashed by what lashes him because what is at stake in his decision is linked up with his very existence, yes, and with his destiny, and he knows it. He is caught between himself and himself, and he must strike the severing blow. He is a self-divided house. He is at one and the same time the inevitable discordant result of the process whereby he came to be and the indispensable condition to its transcendence. The contradiction exists in order to be resolved, since the resolving of the contradiction is creativity arrived at a new level, the level of moral and spiritual value. And this level, with its concomitants of righteousness and sin according to the issue of the conflict, can be reached in no other way. The process of which comes the most wretched sinner and the process of which comes the most exalted saint is the same process; the difference of outcome is in the difference of the inner guidance. The difference

between Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde was the difference between the enacted preferences of *the same man.*

But that "natural depravity" which is the prerequisite to the process also makes it easier to follow the line of least resistance. One of man's most subtle dangers is in the temptation to *drift.* The determination to drift is the determination to evade deliberate choice. That a refusal to decide is still a decision is just one of those ironies which life uses to entangle the unreflecting. A decision to drift is a decision not to resist, and no decision is more fatal to the high purposes of creativity. For a person never drifts into righteousness; what he does is to drift away from righteousness and to drift away from righteousness is to drift into sin. The tragedy of many a life is in the fact that it was satisfied to be negative in respect of the great moral issues, and only realized when it was too late that this negative habit of mind served to perfection the purposes of discreativity. Very few evil men set out to be what they became. When the ancient mariner shot the albatross, it was rather in malicious thoughtlessness than with deliberate evil intent: he certainly did not apprehend the results. Any drift is in a downward direction: it is a movement away from the higher. He who would enter in must *strive* (Luke 13:24), and the striving in question is not against tangibilities like flesh and blood, the things that must palpably be resisted if mere creaturely existence itself is not to cease; but the striving is against the grim intangibilities that are relative to a man's own nature, "against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." (Eph. 6:12.) Nobody ever saw one of these, and nobody can ever free himself from what these signify.

There is, indeed, no virtue in struggle *per se.* Before we can estimate a man as a fighter, we must know what he is fighting for. Fighting for the unworthy is unworthy fighting, Browning in "The Statue and the Bust" notwithstanding:

> Let a man contend to the uttermost
> For his life's set prize, be it what it will!
> . . . . . .
> And the sin I impute to each frustrate ghost
> Is—the unlit lamp and the ungirt loin,
> Though the end in sight was a vice, I say.

We question the judgment, even in Browning's setting for it. *What* a man strives for is what eventually makes the man, and the fact makes the *what* supremely important. Among the souls whom Dante saw fit to assign to the Inferno were many who had striven mightily, but they had striven for the wrong thing. In Canto XIX, for example, he describes the dreadful plight of certain popes who had been guilty of the sin of simony, that is to say, had followed the practice of selling for money to enrich themselves the high offices of the church. There was nothing incidental about the practice. It was deliberate. Pope Nicholas and those other popes who shared his fate or who were yet to share it, had girt their loins and had shod their feet in the pursuit of their unholy ends. Their very devotion to evil had transformed them into its own likeness; this, indeed, is the general principle on which Dante peoples his Inferno. A man, a group of men, a nation, may contend with utter abandonment for that which so far from adding to the wealth and meaning of life, detracts from it, as in our own time we have had occasion to know. The false ideal is, in fact, one of the most potent weapons in the arsenal of demonic evil. To keep men busy about the unworthy is the best way to assure their indifference respecting the worthy. The enormous amount of human effort directed toward that which, judged by the manifest meaning of human life, contains in itself the seeds of its own destruction, since what is sought is not good but evil—this is the most incontrovertible evidence to the actuality of human depravity. Coleridge at first supported the French Revolution, but when in due time France turned on Switzerland, "where Peace her jealous home had built," then he charged France with "traitorous guilt," a blind and pernicious mockery of heaven:

> Are these thy boasts, Champion of human kind?
> To mix with Kings in the low lust of sway,
> Yell in the hunt, and share the murderous prey;
> To insult the shrine of Liberty with spoils
> From freemen torn; to tempt and to betray?

It is sadly possible for life to be conducted with reference to a disvalue. The discreative may be assigned the place that belongs to the creative. The Greeks described sin as *hamartia*—missing

the mark. Here at least we can approve Browning, that "not failure, but low aim, is crime."

Yet it is human experience that devotion to the evil is not attained except against the protest of an inner voice. A capacity of self-judgment, self-criticism, self-rebuke, is intrinsic to the very nature of man. No naturalistic account of the psychological and sociological genesis of this capacity can change the fact that it is there, exercising the office of a censor. We are, in a word, confronted here with *conscience*. The effort of creativity to reach in and through man a higher level of life would be fruitless without this capacity. *The consent of inwardness must be won to that which it is the purpose of inwardness to achieve.* That achievement cannot come whether or no. "Whether or no" means drifting, and drifting at this point spells disaster. It is not enough that the agelong interplay of creativity and discreativity should have produced in man a creature of such complex nature as for him to be able to bring to light a whole new world of values. If he is not to wander aimlessly, flitting like the hummingbird from flower to flower, he must also be provided with a power that gives him some assurance of right direction. He has that power, and we call it conscience. Here is the quick nerve of the lash and of the leash—of the lash that yet may be ignored until its blows grow weaker and weaker; of the leash that yet may be resisted until its pull is no longer felt. Such ignoring and such resisting is a possibility implicit in the premises; they are concomitants of the freedom that goes with inwardness; and the full realization of the possibility constitutes that "sin against the Holy Ghost," the active principle of creativity, which of necessity "hath never forgiveness."

For it belongs to a man to commit himself, and the commitment is always under the control of a prior judgment. No commitment can manifest itself outwardly until it has first been made inwardly. He who makes a commitment is saying, in effect: "This is what I want; by this I am content to be judged; what this commitment will do for me I want to have done." Where else than here is the very basis of morality? What else than this can morality mean? In what other way than this could life acquire a moral quality? The man whose nature was woven of the ceaseless action of the spindle of Necessity, and in whose nature is an inwardness which focalizes in freedom, is thereby an arena for the conflict of evil in

such wise that through him alone can good take on the character of righteousness and evil the character of sin. Conscience is the alembic by which the transformation is effected. Through no other door than the door of conscience can a man be involuntarily invaded by a sense of something greater than himself to which he owes allegiance, but from which he may nevertheless turn. He may shut the door, but the door is not thereby destroyed. All it does is to become a part of the wall in which he has elected to imprison himself—for what man is more truly a prisoner than the man who has cut himself off from that Otherness whose existence is attested by his very nature, and apart from which he becomes something less than human!

Man is constituted with reference to an inner check, but the authority of this check is *moral*: that is to say, it cannot enforce its own behests, it can only present them. Its presence in human nature is an absolute in the sense that a man without it would not be a man; but if it is to *function* as an absolute, it can do so only with the consent of the man himself. And then the paradox of conscience reveals itself. Conscience which in a given case has lost its power to control reveals its power to torment. That which seemed to be dead becomes alive in a new and dreadful way. What is hell but a life in which conscience can no longer act as a leash to guide, but has become altogether a lash to whip and nothing more? Milton describes even Satan as not exempt from this law, and we must not forget that all that Milton says about the moral collapse of Satan is, in principle, true about mankind, since Milton's Satan is but a man writ large. Milton first describes Satan's condition after his "fall" in heaven and as he meditates his plan to bring about the "fall" in the newly-created Eden:

> Horror and doubt distract
> His troubled thoughts, and from the bottom stir
> The hell within him; for within him Hell
> He brings, and round about him, nor from Hell
> One step, no more than from himself, can fly
> By change of place. Now conscience wakes despair
> That slumber'd; wakes the bitter memory
> Of what he was, what is, and what must be.

The description is in the opening paragraph of the fourth book of *Paradise Lost*. It is followed by the dreadful speech of Satan him-

self, in which the enemy of God and men describes his own distraught condition. He addresses himself, after admitting that others in heaven, as great as he, did not fall, but stood unshaken by virtue of that which was in themselves. He laments:

> Hadst thou [Satan] the same free will and power to stand?
> Thou hadst. Whom hast thou then, or what, to accuse,
> But Heaven's free love dealt equally to all?
> Be then his love accursed, since love or hate,
> To me alike it deals eternal woe.
> Nay, cursed be thou; since against his thy will
> Chose freely what it now so justly rues.
> Me miserable! which way shall I fly
> Infinite wrath and infinite despair?
> Which way I fly is Hell; myself am Hell;
> And, in the lowest deep, a lower deep
> Still threatening to devour me opens wide,
> To which the Hell I suffer seems a Heaven.
> O, then at last relent! Is there no place
> Left for repentance, none for pardon left?
> None left but by submission; and that word
> Disdain forbids me, and my dread of shame
> Among the Spirits beneath, whom I seduced
> With other promises and other vaunts
> Than to submit, boasting I could subdue
> The Omnipotent. Ay me! they little know
> How dearly I abide that boast so vain,
> Under what torments inwardly I groan,
> While they adore me on the throne of Hell,
> With diadem and sceptre high advanced,
> The lower still I fall, only supreme
> In misery.

The substance of that lament is inwrought in the history of men. Satan or no Satan, the experience it deals with is human experience. Here is the theme of many of the great literary tragedies. When what was meant to be a leash to bind men to the highest becomes instead nothing but a tormenting lash, it is a lash indeed.

That there is another side to the story only serves to show how entirely crucial conscience is to the fulfillment of the meaning of human life. Not only do dreadful things befall men who are abandoned to the discreative lash; deep and rich and satisfying and transforming experiences come to men who yield themselves to

the creative leash. The literary tragedy does not deal only with souls in self-torment: it deals also with souls who are "sustained and soothed by an unfaltering trust" by reason of an inner commitment which yet has involved them in the saddest of external calamities. We are not to forget that Prometheus endured the tortures of the Caucasian rock because he would not abandon an inner loyalty to *right;* or that Antigone preferred the punishment inflicted of the laws of men to the punishments inflicted of the unwritten laws of heaven—unwritten, yet still written in her very soul. Inner peace and outward confusion was deemed of higher worth than inward confusion and outward peace.

This is not some rare thing among mankind. This, departed from though it often enough is, is recognized as *the norm of worthy life.* Even although so many things conspire to make a man a rebel, and even although the rebelliousness sooner or later becomes concrete, there is never quite wanting an awareness of the fact, and that very awareness that the sense of right direction has not been followed is evidence. It is evidence to what manner of creature man is in himself. It is evidence to the operation of a divine factor in the process by which he came. It is evidence to the conditions that must be met if he would find peace. It is evidence to a future "end" toward which he is intended to move. And it is evidence to a world of more-than-human reality which human life must possess to come to its true level.

That so much should depend upon so apparently frail a thing as conscience is amazing enough, until we see that it is not without analogy. John Oman, in the revised edition of *Vision and Authority,* has dwelt at length on the significance of the optic nerve. The optic nerve is a very little thing. By what long processes it came to be, and by what long processes the necessary attendant network of relationships was established, we can only surmise. Yet upon the functioning of this tiny filament depends for any man the whole rich and diverse world of sight. All color, all lovely form, all far-spreading landscape, knowledge of the face of the beloved, knowledge of the star-studded midnight sky itself—all these literally hang by a thread. It seems strange that if the Creator of men intended men to see, he should not have made the means of seeing more secure, protected against the possibility of a destroying mishap. For all that, the uncertain means fairly serve their purpose. Not only so,

but we trust to what we see. Even if we check vision by certain "tests," the very checks depend upon the use of vision! Vision needs no pope to validate it. Vision needs no authentication as to its principle. Its authenticity is in itself, and its authority is in itself. The creative venture with the optic nerve has been abundantly justified! Yet its destruction is always a possibility—with incalculable loss.

Is the creative venture at the point of conscience any less justifiable? What a world of new experience it makes possible for life! And how easily this world may be missed! What else would the demonic wish to destroy more than conscience? How more effectively could the creative divine be frustrated? With conscience gone, the tide of battle turns in favor of the discreative. While conscience retains its directive power, the creative may move forward. Where conscience exists, life and death, the divine and the demonic—shall we say now God and his Adversary—are still the contenders, but there is a quality in the contending life, and a quality in the life being contended for, which gives the contest a truly momentous character. Evil is here, and good is here, enemies as they always were and must be, but the *character* of the enmity is now seen in its true light. Now is revealed what kind of life creativity is seeking and discreativity would prevent. There is no evil and no good comparable to the evil and the good which may come through men. It is in and by men that good can suffer its supreme possible corruption, and where good is most corrupted there evil is most manifest.

Conscience is the hope and promise of the triumph of good. Conscience is a necessity of the very function which human nature exists to carry out. It is the logic of the process which the creative conflict has here arrived at. The other powers of man without this power are self-frustrated. He can think, but he must be moved to think truly. He can love, but he must be moved to love worthily. He can plan, but he must be moved to plan constructively. He can reshape his world, but he must be moved to reshape it for the increase of good. He can bring his own life under a central control, but he must be moved to choose a control whose activity shall be beneficent.

Wherein lies the possibility of this necessary directive—necessary, by every deduction, to that high creativity which man has been

produced to exercise? It lies in the existence of that obligatory sense of direction which we call conscience. Conscience is the capacity to feel disturbance and the capacity to feel approbation according to how that sense is allowed to determine the basic inner commitments.

Conscience, however, is not an infallible guide, taken alone. In fact, it cannot be "taken alone." The function of conscience is exercised within a total human situation, and the situation bears on conscience just as really as conscience bears on the situation. This is why the *specific conception* of wrongness or rightness changes according to time and place and circumstance. Conscience guarantees rather that judgment shall attend decision than that the act of decision itself shall be infallible. Decision is made in the light of experience and instruction; it calls for consideration and judgment. But the *ought* or *ought-not* always hovers in the background, and according as that is heeded or not heeded there will be self-blame or self-approval. The diverse elements of the situation merge in a common purpose. The purpose is either a purpose of right or a purpose of wrong, and the self-estimate attends the purpose. This is guaranteed by human nature itself, and it looks toward the possibility of the purpose of right or the purpose of wrong becoming habitual. In such habituation, good or evil, as the case may be, has ceased to be an element in a conflict. The issue has been settled, and the settlement is destiny arrived at fixity.

Chapter V. A BOOK OF TESTIMONY

IN THE PRESENT ATTEMPT TO UNDERSTAND THE HUMAN SITUATION under the categories of creativity and discreativity, or the divine and the demonic, we have already made some use of literary testimony. This literature is a form of art, and all art assumes the reality, or at least the desirability, of a perfection whose concrete realization must overcome a thousand obstacles. All great literature is a transcript of life. It is a description and an interpretation of human experience. It may be both realistic and idealistic—realistic in its account of what actually happens in the life of men, idealistic in what it reads out of the facts. It faces us with what is undeniably so, but in at least its best moments it achieves an insight into possible meanings which may make a great drama a prophetic declaration, a great story a searching sermon, a great tragedy a means of spiritual *catharsis*. Of more than one novel of Dostoevski it could be truly said that its theme is a precipitate of the Epistle to the Romans! For all its archaic form, *The Pilgrim's Progress* of the humble Bedford tinker reveals an insight into the workings of the human soul not inferior to any tragedy of Aeschylus, to any play of Shakespeare, to any novel of Thomas Hardy, to any drama of George Bernard Shaw.

In this "Book of Testimony" the selections obviously represent personal fancy. Where the offerings are so rich, choice is inevitable; but choice is largely a matter of one's own taste, and *de gustibus non disputandum*. All that needs to be said is that any other group of selections from the almost inexhaustible supply would bear the same testimony, namely, "By much tribulation man enters the kingdom."

To invoke blind Homer at this point will not please everybody. The pedantic littérateur dislikes nothing so much as the use of a classic as a moral homily. The feeling is quite understandable, but when the classic enshrines a racial myth, it is certain that much more was intended than the mere telling of a tale. The ancient story

of the wanderings of the much-enduring Ulysses, especially his journey from Troy back to Ithaca, is a parable of life, both of racial life and of individual life, and even he who runs may so read it. Let anyone consider the "myth" of the winged souls and the charioteer in Plato's *Phaedrus*, and the "tale" of Ulysses in Homer's *Odyssey*, and he can hardly escape the conviction that they are two different ways of dealing with the same basic conception of life. And whether the *Odyssey* comes from Homer himself, or is a later compilation, makes no least difference in what is conveyed. Indeed, the Homer pattern and the Plato pattern bear a strange similarity to the Bible pattern. All describe life under the same form, a painful journey from home lost to home recovered. Home, whether it be called Olympus, or Ithaca, or Eden, may be left very quickly. To recover it will tax a man to the utmost. A nostalgia afflicts him, but so also does the disposition to give up the effort to return as costing too much. "The fleshpots of Egypt" haunt the memory of any man who must wander in the wilderness before he can come to his Promised Land.

The distance from Troy to Ithaca was not long geographically, but it was long every other way, and it consumed ten bitter years. First Ulysses must meet the Lotos-Eaters, who would lure him to a life of forgetful ease. Then it was the huge Cyclopes, fiercest of them all the one-eyed Polyphemus, who would destroy him and his men who had escaped the Lotos-Eaters. That danger past, he is set upon by the Laestrygonians, who destroyed all his ships except his own, and all his men except his own crew. Soon it is the soft-spoken Circe, who having banqueted Ulysses' crew changed them into the form of swine, although in mind they were still men. He and a few of his men escaped Circe only to meet the Sirens, with their sinuous bodies and their strangely fascinating songs. No struggle was more bitter than the struggle to pass the Sirens. The dreadful Scylla must then be escaped, the six-headed monster who could reach out her great length and with each of her six mouths lift a sailor from his ship. The escape from Scylla brought the mariners to the edge of the roaring Charybdis, a whirlpool so vast and so treacherous that Neptune himself could not save the vessel that was caught in it. When the struggle to avoid Charybdis was over, the weary crew came to the island where the sacred oxen of the Sun were kept, some of which they killed for food.

Refreshed, they resumed their journey, but Hyperion, the sun-god, angered at the killing of the oxen, sent a dreadful storm which wrecked the ship, and only Ulysses was cast up alone on the island of Calypso. We think of Isaiah's "remnant."

Here the bereft Ulysses met the severest trial of all. Calypso was a beautiful sea nymph. She fell in love with the storm-tossed wanderer, and promised if he would remain with her, to confer upon him the gift of immortality. Only one thing kept Ulysses steadfast through that severe testing—the thought of Ithaca, the thought of the patiently-waiting Penelope, the thought of the valiant Telemachus. From Ithaca he had come, and to Ithaca he would return as a man who had kept his faith. He built himself a raft, and sailed away from the extended arms of Calypso. The "leash" held!

But the dark powers were determined to conquer Ulysses. His very resolution only the more incensed them. Again he was wrecked. One would like to believe that it was indeed blind Homer who tells the tale, and that of his blindness came a deeper insight. For he saw that there is that in existence which will not permit the faithful soul to be entirely crushed. Gethsemane is never complete desolation: a ministering angel hovers near. The shipwreck that seemed to mark the end of Ulysses did, in actual fact, mark the end of his long misfortune.

One thinks—and without unseemliness in this connection—of Christian's meeting with Apollyon, as described by Bunyan. Apollyon was a monster "hideous to behold," clothed with scales like a fish. "He had wings like a dragon, and feet like a bear, and out of his belly came fire and smoke; and his mouth was as the mouth of a lion." He recognized in Christian a former subject, and tried to persuade him to change masters again. On Christian's declaring that that was something he would never do, Apollyon "broke out in a fearful rage," declared he would kill Christian, and hurled at him "a flaming dart." The two engaged in bitter conflict, Christian being often wounded, and growing weaker from loss of blood. In a moment of close encounter Christian's sword flew out of his hand, and left him at the mercy of his enemy. Apollyon prepared to give him the final blow, but as Christian staggered back under it, he found himself in a position to regain his sword. Crying, "When I fall I shall arise," Christian gave

Apollyon a deadly thrust, from which he reeled in unaccustomed fear.

Bunyan continues: "Christian made at him again, saying, 'Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.' And with that Apollyon spread forth his dragon wings and sped him away, that Christian saw him no more." Grateful for his deliverance when hope of it seemed gone, Christian thus expressed his thanks:

> Great Beelzebub, the captain of this fiend,
> Designed my ruin: therefore to this end
> He sent him harnessed out; and he, with rage
> That hellish was, did fiercely me engage:
> But blessed Michael helped me; and I,
> By dint of sword, did quickly make him fly;
> Therefore to Him let me give lasting praise,
> And thank and bless His holy name always.

Similarly with Ulysses, lying unkempt, famished, almost unrecognizable as a human being, on another strange coast, shipwrecked again. But in his sad plight he was discovered by the maiden Nausicaa, who took compassion on him, and unafraid led him to her father's palace. The strange visitor was treated royally, but when, at the close of the banquet, the minstrels came in, and began to sing the fall of Troy and her lofty towers, Ulysses, thinking of all his dead companions, burst into tears. Pressed to tell why he wept, he told his rescuers, the Phaeacians, who he was—Ulysses, prince of Ithaca, and he told the tale of the seige of Troy, and of all his wanderings since. The rest of the familiar story, how the Phaeacians prepared him a ship, and landed him, asleep, on the coast of Ithaca, how he made his way to his palace, how he was greeted by the faithful Penelope and the stalwart Telemachus, and with what swiftness he dealt with the treacherous suitors—this need not be repeated. Ulysses had completed his circle. The nostalgia had been too strong for every contrary inducement. Home at last!

This conception of life, as a journey from home to home, a journey made in the face of great odds, is the theme of much of the world's great literature. Life does not begin at zero and build itself up by simple accretions, in the fashion of a coral reef. Life is a process of fulfillment. It is not an attempt to make something

out of nothing. Life begins with a power, a loss, and a promise, precisely as in the Garden of Eden narrative. The promise is the promise of the recovery of the loss. The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head. The battle will be won in the very place where it was lost, in the depths of the soul itself. What but this is the meaning of that profound piece of human reflection—the *Enneads* of Plotinus? The theme of Plotinus is how the soul passed from the light into the darkness and through that very darkness found its way back to the light again. And by reason of the "entanglement" in the darkness it came to a quality which it never could have had otherwise. *What the Creator brings to pass against the opposition of the Adversary has a meaning which could never be reached without the opposition.* It is something to consider. The wrath of the Adversary promotes the purposes and augments the praise of the Creator! So great a paradox does existence unfold.

May one venture to consider from this standpoint the legend of King Arthur? Here again the literary pedant will object; but *King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table* is a form of a widely-extended medieval racial myth as genuine as anything in Homer or in Ovid. What is finally important here is not the *form* but the *meaning*, as surely, shall we say, as in the book of Job or the book of Daniel or the book of the Revelation of John, or, for that matter, the parable of the prodigal son and the parable of the good Samaritan.

Tennyson frankly deals with the legend as allegorical, and this notwithstanding the various devices to give it historical verisimilitude. There never was such a King Arthur as Tennyson depicts. The critic would hardly say of Arthur what Wordsworth said of the Highland girl, who was to him "a phantom of delight":

> A Creature not too bright or good
> For human nature's daily food;
> For transient sorrows, simple wiles,
> Praise, blame, love, kisses, tears, and smiles.

William Morris' *Defence of Guinevere*, with its bold approval of the queen's relation to Lancelot, finds an echo in many a frail human heart. Arthur is too good to be lived with! He is like Tennyson's Maud:

Faultily faultless, icily regular, splendidly null,
Dead perfection, no more.

So the critic. But an ideal is an ideal only because it is a little above the level of attainment. What lifts must be higher than what is lifted.

A man's reach should exceed his grasp,
Or what's a heaven for?

Arthur is nobody; yet in another sense, Arthur is Everyman. The legend of him, as told by Tennyson, is a dramatization of the inescapable Odyssey that awaits the faithful soul. If Arthur keeps Excalibur unsullied to the end, and ordinary men do not, still *the dream of unsulliedness* is a valid dream.

That low man seeks a little thing to do,
Sees it and does it;
This high man, with a great thing to pursue,
Dies ere he knows it.
That low man goes on adding one to one,
His hundred's soon hit:
This high man, aiming at a million,
Misses an unit.
That, has the world here—should he need the next,
Let the world mind him!
This, throws himself on God, and unperplexed
Seeking shall find Him.

That is why the students of the old and almost blinded Grammarian agreed that the only fitting place to bury him was on the mountain top; even as at a later day on a distant southern island the sturdy Samoans cut a path to the summit of precipitous Vaea, and there buried, with the Pacific Ocean all around him, the body of their beloved "chief," the pain-racked, disease-ridden, cruelly-exiled, but ever valiant "Tusitala," known forever to English literature as "R.L.S."

This be the verse you grave for me:
Here he lies where he longed to be;
Home is the sailor, home from the sea,
And the hunter home from the hill.

So Browning thinks of the Grammarian being born aloft on the shoulders of his students who, as they climb, cry:

Leave we the unlettered plain its herd and crop;
Seek we sepulture
On a tall mountain, citied to the top,
Crowded with culture!
. . . . . .
Our low life was the level's and the night's;
He's for the morning.
Step to a tune, square chests, erect each head,
'Ware the beholders!
This is our master, famous, calm, and dead,
Borne on our shoulders.

For any Moses, Mount Nebo is the fitting place to await the chariot of the Lord.

We shall not turn from King Arthur, then, because he was too perfect. Rather shall we seek to learn by what means he attained and kept his stature. We may at least use the means, even although the stature be beyond us.

Whence Arthur came in the first place, nobody knows. He was like the ancient Melchisedek, without father or mother. The night that King Uther lay dying, and dying hard because he had no son to succeed him, a ship like a dragon was seen to descend from the heavens, and rest for a moment on the water, and disappear. Those who saw the strange sight rushed to the shore, and as they stood there in amazement at what they had seen, the waves cast up at their feet a naked babe. Merlin, the wise counselor, grasped the babe, and cried, "The new King! An heir for Uther!" That was how Arthur came "out of the everywhere into the here," a gift of heaven, as every babe must be!

Just as mysterious was the way in which Arthur acquired his great sword Excalibur. It too was a gift from heaven, coming to him from a hand outstretched from the waters of the lake. How he used his sword; how he kept his faith; how he brought a semblance of order to his realm; how sorely he was tried; how he found treachery on every hand; how his most cherished knight Lancelot played him false with the lovely Guinevere; how enemies increased and came ever nearer; how at last he was left with but a single knight—this is the story of the Knights of the Round Table, and its gradual disintegration.

The time came when Arthur was to die according to what was predicted. He had learned of the treachery of Lancelot and of the

falseness of Guinevere. He had tracked Guinevere to her hiding place in the convent, and in a tragic interview had rebuked her, blessed her, forgiven her, confessed his unchanging love for her, and bidden her a final farewell.

> But hither shall I never come again,
> Never lie by thy side, see thee no more—
> Farewell!

The Queen heard the departing footsteps, and crept to the window, with the hope that though she were not seen of him she might yet see his face once more. Even that boon was to be denied her:

> Lo, he sat on horseback at the door!
> And near him the sad nuns with each a light
> Stood, and he gave them charge about the Queen,
> To guard and foster her for evermore.
> And while he spake to these his helm was lower'd,
> To which for crest the golden dragon clung
> Of Britain; *so she did not see the face*,
> Which then was as an angel's, but she saw,
> Wet with the mists and smitten by the lights,
> The Dragon of the great Pendragonship
> Blaze, making all the night a steam of fire.
> And even then he turn'd; and more and more
> The moony vapor rolling round the King,
> Who seem'd the phantom of a giant in it,
> Enwound him fold by fold, and made him gray
> And grayer, till himself became as mist
> Before her, moving ghostlike to his doom.

For *doom* it was to be. Arthur left the convent for his last battle, the battle to be fought against Modred, the Judas Iscariot of the Table Round. A heavy fog enveloped the battlefield, and a man could not well discern whether he fought with friend or foe. As the day ended a cold wind blew from the North, the fog lifted, and Arthur, alone but for the faithful Sir Bedivere, looked over the desolate moor. Not a living person could he see:

> King Arthur's Table, man by man,
> Had fallen in Lyonnesse about their lord.

But not all. One yet remained, a shameful relic. There, approaching, was Modred, still unharmed; and Arthur, weary as he was

from the bitter conflict of the day, must gird himself for one more struggle, the last.

The moment is fittingly dramatic. Arthur, the knightly soul, "the highest and most human too," as Guinevere discovered when it was too late, and Modred, the incarnation of all evil, the Adversary in human form,

> he that like a subtle beast
> Lay couchant with his eyes upon the throne,
> Ready to spring, waiting a chance
> . . . . . .
> To make disruption in the Table Round
> Of Arthur, and to splinter it into feuds
> Serving his traitorous end.

Modred is playing his foul part to the very end, and now raises his sword against the King. But the Excalibur that had never failed the King before did not fail him in the last blow he was ever to strike. Modred fell dead, but not till Arthur too was smitten sore.

Slowly Sir Bedivere bore the wounded King to the little chapel by the edge of the lake. This was the lake whence Excalibur had come in the first place. Arthur knew he would need the great sword no more. What more fitting thing to do than to return it to the lake?

Sir Bedivere was charged with the mission:

> But now delay not; take Excalibur,
> And fling him far into the middle mere;
> Watch what thou seest, and lightly bring me word.

But Sir Bedivere was not minded to throw away so marvelous a weapon. He loved the great sword, its bejewelled hilt, its double edge. Twice he hid the sword in the rushes, and twice he came back with the same false report:

> I heard the ripple washing in the reeds,
> And the wild water lapping on the crag,

and twice the King rebuked him for his lie:

> Thou wouldst betray me for the precious hilt;
> Either from lust of gold, or like a girl
> Valuing the giddy pleasure of the eyes.
> Yet, for a man may fail in duty twice,

> And the third time may prosper, get thee hence;
> But if thou spare to fling Excalibur,
> I will arise and slay thee with my hands!

And Sir Bedivere threw it, threw it with all the strength that was in him, closing his eyes lest the sight of the wondrous hilt should turn him from his purpose. Then he looked, and as he looked the miracle of Excalibur's coming was repeated. Up from the lake reached an arm,

> Clothed in white samite, mystic, wonderful,
> And caught him by the hilt, and brandish'd him
> Three times, and drew him under in the mere.

Hearing the report, the King understood its meaning: it signified his death. He bade Sir Bedivere assist him to the margin of the lake. And there a barge was waiting, a funeral barge. On its deck were three black-robed queens with crowns of gold. With loud lamentations they received from Sir Bedivere the dying King, who lay "like a shatter'd column." And the King spoke—a retrospect, a prayer, a prophecy:

> The old order changeth, yielding place to new,
> And God fulfils himself in many ways,
> Lest one good custom should corrupt the world.
> Comfort thyself; what comfort is in me?
> I have lived my life, and that which I have done
> May He within himself make pure! But thou,
> If thou shouldst never see my face again,
> Pray for my soul. More things are wrought by prayer
> Than this world dreams of. Wherefore, let thy voice
> Rise like a fountain for me night and day.
> For what are men better than sheep or goats,
> That nourish a blind life within the brain,
> If, knowing God, they lift not hands of prayer
> Both for themselves and those who call them friend?
> For so the whole round earth is every way
> Bound by gold chains about the feet of God.

Thus Arthur spoke his farewell, and the barge sailed away "to the island-valley of Avilion," a legendary realm, where, said the King, "I will heal me of my grievous wound."

Merlin had once said of Arthur, when questioned about the manner of his coming and perchance of his going: "From the great deep to the great deep he goes." It was given to Sir Bedivere to watch him as he went, the knightly soul who, having kept the faith through evil report and through good, had finished his course and could anticipate the victor's crown.

Much has been said about Tennyson's having transformed a rough legendary medieval knight into a pious Victorian gentleman. But the critics' sneer is the critics' self-revelation. They miss the poet's deeper intent, perhaps deliberately. They use a false measure. For them the story of a man's life is the story of how what came from the dust returns at last to the dust again. But Tennyson did not believe that. No man could have written *In Memoriam* who believed that! Let it be admitted that Arthur is man idealized, but why is idealization a crime? Why is it more defensible to depict man, in the fashion of the modern "fleshly school of novelists," for whom man is a creature who supposes that the mere fact of an impulse is sufficient reason for yielding to it regardless, than to depict him as a being to whom it belongs to turn aside from

> The reeling Faun, the sensual feast;
> Move upward, working out the beast,
> And let the ape and tiger die.

Tennyson saw in man more than the clamant relics of the jungle. He did not doubt that the relics were there, but neither did he doubt that the heritage could be brought under control, and made ministrant to a diviner life. In the mighty throes of creative agony, the womb of nature had yielded man. But man was more than *just that*. He bore an image and a superscription, evidence of a spirit in him touched with power and purpose to rule the low in the name of the high.

> No longer half-akin to brute:
> For all we thought and loved and did,
> And hoped and suffer'd, is but seed
> Of what in them is flower and fruit.

What was said of King Arthur was a faith: "From the great deep to the great deep he goes," and of that faith we are still to seek some authentication. Nevertheless, the last will and testament of the man who wrote the Idylls, interpret them how we may, still carries the power to answer men's doubts and inspire their hopes:

> For tho' from out our bourne of Time and Place
> The flood may bear me far,
> I hope to see my Pilot face to face
> When I have crossed the bar.

Or consider the character of Brand, wherein the often-tormented soul of Ibsen has revealed much of itself, which is to say much of its reading of its own experience. Brand is portrayed as a soul that was forever being caught between the demand of the low and the demand of the high, but never broken in its determination to give the high the right of way. Brand, whose name in Norwegian means "fire," took upon himself to make atonement for the sins of others, in particular of his mother. There must be no compromise, he declared, in respect of the utter difference between right and wrong. The motto of the tragedy is, in fact, "all or nothing." There could be no limit to the demand for sacrifice. Brand is, indeed, a Kierkegaardian character. What the world thinks means nothing. All that matters is the inner integrity. "To thine own self be true!" The principle, "He who would lose his life shall find it," here confronts us as equally the ethical principle and the religious principle. The fact that Brand was a clergyman is quite incidental to the tragedy. What he was led to exemplify was a truth embedded in the very structure of life, not one arbitrarily laid upon it. Ibsen, indeed, portrayed in Brand the incorruptible moral loyalist he himself would fain have been. There are times when Brand, in his utter loneliness, death threatening to rob him of his wife and child, seems in danger of yielding. But he conquers, and when at last, alone on the mountain with only the mad Gerd for companion, the avalanche sweeps him away, all that death claims is a life that would not yield to the siren voices, alluring as they were. And as the avalanche takes him, a voice from heaven is heard, *Deus caritas*—"God is merciful love."

There are those who regard that voice as a rebuke, since Brand had sacrificed even love for inner integrity. They see in Brand the

impossible. Even so, the conception remains: a man set the appeal of love, which was individualistic, over against the appeal of conscience, which was not individualistic since it was the representative in every man of an Absolute Otherness, and through the way of deep sorrow gave his allegiance to conscience. Perhaps, in actual fact, Brand did not know what *caritas*, merciful love, actually meant. Perhaps the deeper meaning of the Cross was hidden from him. Perhaps he did not see that when *love* becomes *holy* it takes on a significance and power that can never pertain to the *holy* that knows not love. When *Agape*, self-giving Love, takes the place of *Eros*, possessive selfish love, then even *Nomos*, Law, finds its fulfillment. Therefore, however Brand is to be interpreted at this point, he embodies the moral actuality which, whether by victorious love or by a self-sufficient will, whether by one's own dire struggle or by that of Another (*and Christianity says by that of Another*) is the one thing that is to be kept central.

> A will that's whole—
> A soaring faith, a single soul,
> The willingness to lose, that gave
> Itself rejoicing to the grave;
> A crown of thorns on every brow—
> That is the wage you're earning now!

Lashed—but still leashed!

Browning treats the essential theme in his own warmer and more vital way in *Paracelsus*. The theme of the admittedly difficult poem is that of the aspiration and attainment of Paracelsus. We see a man in travail of his own true self, born as it must be of contention. The soul of Paracelsus is a battlefield, and he himself shifts from side to side. He aspired greatly, but had to learn by sad experience that happiness and peace depend upon the character of the aspiration. He aspired to that knowledge which is power, or so he thought. In his soul was a restlessness to know, to prod the secrets of nature, to make himself master of existence. His aim was nothing less than

> to comprehend the works of God,
> And God himself, and all God's intercourse
> With the human mind.

He believed that a divine spirit was prompting him to the quest. To accomplish it he would leave all things behind. His purpose inspired him to declare:

> I go to prove my soul!
> I see my way as birds their trackless way.
> I shall arrive! what time, what circuit first,
> I ask not: but unless God send his hail
> Or blinding fireballs, sleet or stifling snow,
> In some time, his good time, I shall arrive:
> He guides me and the bird. In his good time!

His friends try to dissuade him from his purpose, but his resolution is fixed. He does not realize, for all his often use of the name of God, that his motive in the great endeavor is *pride*. Paracelsus' interest is in Paracelsus.

> Are there not, Festus, are there not, dear Michal,
> Two points in the adventure of the diver,
> One—when, a beggar, he prepares to plunge,
> One—when, a prince, he rises with his pearl?
> Festus, I plunge!

And Festus answers: "We wait you when you rise!"

Did Paracelsus attain? He did. He attained the much desired knowledge—and then he made the great disquieting discovery: that while he had come to knowledge he had not come to love, and knowledge without love was Dead Sea fruit. He returns to his friends to tell them of his failure. He who had thought, as befitted a humanist, that intelligence was the be-all and the end-all of man's life, that by which man is constituted, or rather, self-constituted, "the measure of all things," sees that it is but a part. He, Paracelsus the universal scholar, is still nostalgic because he has not found his soul's true home.

> From God
> Down to the lowest spirit ministrant,
> Intelligence exists which casts our mind
> Into immeasurable shade. No, no:
> Love, hope, fear, faith—these make humanity;
> These are its sign and note and character,
> And these I have lost!—gone, shut from me for ever,
> Like a dead friend safe from unkindness more!

The restlessness that comes upon Paracelsus burns him out. He enters a hospital cell to die. His old friend Festus sits by the cot, listening to the half-delirium. The mind that had fathomed the secrets of nature is tormented and anguished. Why? Pride of intellect is desolation of soul because the ultimate surrender has not been made. Love is wanting, and must be wanting, because it exacts a price, and the price has not been paid. Life is born of love because it is born of a conflict that love endured to make life possible, and only in the love of which it comes and in which it has its being can life reach its goal. Paracelsus thinks the dead Michal is near him. He reaches out to clasp her, but she fades away. He mutters:

> And she is gone; sweet human love is gone!
> 'Tis only when they spring to heaven that angels
> Reveal themselves to you; they sit all day
> Beside you, and lie down at night by you
> Who care not for their presence, muse or sleep,
> And all at once they leave you, and you know them!
> We are so fooled, so cheated!

The continued philosophizings of the dying Paracelsus are almost overwhelming in the insights they betray. There is a tremendous passage on the way in which the whole creative process comes to its consummation in man. And what a difference man's arrival makes! It marks not only the climax of the old: it marks also the beginning of something entirely new. The powers that come with man shed their light over all the rest of existence:

> Man, once descried, imprints for ever
> His presence on all lifeless things; the winds
> Are henceforth voices, wailing or a shout,
> A querulous mutter or a quick gay laugh,
> Never a senseless gust now man is born.

And yet it is not enough that man be born. The man that is born must pass over into the man that cannot be born, but can only be grown, grown according to the pattern the born part of him but serves to project. He must be perfected, and against odds that meet him at every turn, such odds, shall we interject, as those that crystallized in one dramatic moment before the tortured sight of Childe Roland:

There they stood, ranged along the hillsides, met
To view the last of me, a living frame
For one more picture! in a sheet of flame
I saw them and I knew them all. And yet
Dauntless the slug-horn to my lips I set,
And blew. *Childe Roland to the Dark Tower came.*

Against such odds must a man make his way. Against such odds must he learn that he can conquer what he feared, and that in the conquest is life indeed.

In completed man begins anew
A tendency to God. Prognostics told
Man's near approach; so in man's self arise
August anticipations, symbols, types
Of a dim splendor ever on before,
In that eternal circle life pursues.

Yet Paracelsus is not at peace. Aspired he had, and as a man must, but his aspiration was earthbound, self-centered, and he was not free. The fact that he had the esteem of men was no compensation for the inner despair. He had missed love, and that, said the dying sage, was his one sin. Yet the failure had not been wholly for nothing, since he had learned thereby to know "the worth of love in man's estate." The loveless life is life incomplete, since it was life unshared: the ego was regnant which was intended to submit. Then is there no hope? Hope is still left, but it concerns the future. He must go from this life into another, and somewhere in that life it may yet be given to him to find that transforming love which is the crown of all God's gifts, because it was for that that life was given in the first place. In that hope Paracelsus dies:

If I stoop
Into a dark tremendous sea of cloud,
It is but for a time; I press God's lamp
Close to my breast; its splendor, soon or late,
Will pierce the gloom: I shall emerge, one day.

It is hardly necessary to add to the testimony. What is everywhere apparent in the human story needs no emphasis, except that it is so often brushed aside. If one more illustration may be permitted, it could very well be Coleridge's *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*, which may be regarded as either an impossible

tale of preternaturalism or—as it actually is—a symbolic description of the torment of a guilty soul become fully aware of its guilt. Josiah Royce, in keeping with his philosophy of loyalty and community, interprets the poem in his *Sources of Religious Insight* as a description of the loneliness engendered by guilt. "The incidents," says Royce, "are the miracles of a magic dream; but the human nature depicted is as real as is the torment of any guilty conscience" (pp. 67*f*.)

The Ancient Mariner certainly supplements *Brand* in respect of its larger recognition of the place of human companionship in the restoration of the soul. Coleridge's poem, in fact, more closely resembles at this point Ibsen's *Peer Gynt* than *Brand*. It also supplements *Paracelsus* in its greater emphasis on the soul-shattering terror that may seize the guilty soul. We must not be misled by Coleridge's indulgence in the magical. This was, in fact, a deliberate agreement he entered into with Wordsworth, when the two men were contemplating the preparation of *Lyrical Ballads*. Both men were to seek to arouse the mood of wonder, Wordsworth by calling attention to the loveliness of commonplace objects, Coleridge by treating things supernatural in such a way as to make them seem credible. In pursuit of the agreement, Wordsworth wrote, among other much less notable pieces, *Tintern Abbey*, and Coleridge wrote *The Ancient Mariner* and the equally weird but much less morally powerful *Christabel*.

That Coleridge supposed he was dealing in *The Ancient Mariner* with moral actuality is undeniable. Coleridge was ever a preacher. He was as theological as he was philosophical. His own life knew its share of tribulation, and when he wrote of the struggles of the soul he wrote of what he knew. What the opium habit, later conquered, did for him in his early years he has himself confessed. If there is a touch of the autobiographical about a man's greatest work, *The Ancient Mariner* may well reveal an aspect of the poet's own experience.

In shooting the albatross, the mariner found that he had committed not simply a deed of thoughtless cruelty, but a deed that set the whole of existence against him. The whole universe declared him an outlaw, and in his own soul he confirmed the sentence. The bird was very much more, therefore, than a bird: it stood for a moral reality which had been ruthlessly crushed,

only to rise again in a new and dreadful form. What began as a pleasant voyage for the ship and her crew turned into a voyage of stark horror. When first the storm struck their vessel, the crew were fearful, but the appearance of the albatross proved a good omen; the storm abated, and the spirits of the crew arose. But, said the mariner, as often afterwards he did penance by telling the tale,

With my cross-bow
I shot the Albatross!

The crew were angered at the "hellish thing," but as the weather continued fair, and the fresh breeze brought the vessel into a "silent sea," the crew agreed that the shooting of the bird might have been a good thing.

But not for long. The "silent sea" proved to be a sea of death. All motion ceased. The heat became intolerable. The ocean turned putrid, and everywhere showed "slimy things" and dancing "death-fires." The crew were made dumb by thirst. They could not say what they thought, but they looked it, and the mariner knew that they held him guilty:

Instead of the cross, the Albatross
About my neck was hung.

At last a sail appeared on the horizon, and the stricken crew took heart. But not for long. As it came near they saw it to be a death-ship! She had a crew of two, and one was Death, and the other was a wild woman, the Nightmare Life-in-Death.

The naked hulk alongside came,
And the twain were casting dice;
"The game is done! I've won! I've won!"
Quoth she, and whistles thrice.

The "specter-bark" shot away, leaving the crew in the clutches of a nameless horror. One by one they dropped dead on the deck, and as their souls slipped away, their going was like the sound of the cross-bow. The mariner was alone:

Alone, alone, all, all alone,
Alone on a wide wide sea!
And never a saint took pity on
My soul in agony.

Nothing around him save dead men, and slimy things that did not die, and the rotting sea. He tried to pray, and his prayer was but "a wicked whisper."

An orphan's curse would drag to hell
A spirit from on high;
But oh! more horrible than that
Is the curse in a dead man's eye!
Seven days, seven nights, I saw that curse,
And yet I could not die.

In utter despair he began to watch the water-snakes, flashing their green and blue and black. Slowly the realization came to him: they were *alive*, and they were *happy*, and they were *beautiful!* The dark spell on him was broken:

A spring of love gushed from my heart
And I blessed them unaware!
Sure my kind saint took pity on me,
And I blessed them unaware.

The selfsame moment I could pray;
And from my neck so free
The Albatross fell off, and sank
Like lead into the sea.

The miracle continued. Rain fell. The wind sprang up. The vessel began to move. One by one the crew appeared to live. They began to work the ship, whose steady motion was caused not by any breeze but by a strange spirit propelling the ship from beneath. Presently the spirit slipped away, the breeze took charge of the sails, and in that moment the mariner fainted. While in the trance, he seemed to hear two voices:

"Is it he?" quoth one, "Is this the man?
By Him who died on cross
With his cruel bow he laid full low
The harmless Albatross.

"The spirit who bideth by himself
In the land of mist and snow,
He loved the bird that loved the man
Who shot him with his bow.

The other was a softer voice,
As soft as honey-dew:
Quoth he, "The man hath penance done,
And penance more will do."

The mariner revived. The night was calm. The dead crew—for they had not actually come to life—were standing together on the deck, fixing on him their stony eyes, and he could not escape their stare. Suddenly the spell was broken. Fair weather takes the ship, and the mariner soon finds himself in his own harbor. He was overpowered by the familiar sights. Then on each corpse appeared "a man all light, a seraph-man." The seraphs signaled the land, and the pilot boat came for the mariner. In the boat with the pilot was "the Hermit good," who prayed for seamen's souls. Then a mysterious rumbling was heard; it seized and shattered the ship, which sank instantly. The mariner found himself in the boat, but such was his appearance that the pilot, the pilot's boy, and the hermit took him for the devil. He himself rowed the boat ashore, and when they landed, the trembling hermit asked him who he was. So he must needs tell his story, and as he told it the agony began to leave him. But from time to time the agony returns, and he gets no relief from it until he again narrates the story. Even the wedding guest must be held from the wedding until he has heard it:

O Wedding-Guest! this soul hath been
Alone on a wide wide sea;
So lonely, 't was, that God himself
Scarce seemed there to be.

O sweeter than the marriage-feast,
'T is sweeter far to me,
To walk together to the kirk,
With a goodly company!—

To walk together to the kirk,
And all together pray,
While each to his great Father bends,
Old men, and babes, and loving friends,
And youths and maidens gay!

Farewell, farewell! but this I tell
To thee, thou Wedding-Guest!

He prayeth well, who loveth well
Both man and bird and beast.

He prayeth best, who loveth best
All things both great and small;
For the dear God who loveth us,
He made and loveth all.

These closing lines do not signify that nothing more is to be conveyed by the story than the lesson of love for all God's creatures. The albatross was more than just one more bird. What followed the shooting of the bird was a sequence of events bespeaking the inescapability of the moral order. Coleridge was not writing just to entertain; he was writing to expose the human soul to itself. Even a thoughtless violation of the law of inwardness, which is written there by the same power that gave the life itself, brings a penalty which calls for penance and expiation. If the leash is not heeded, the lash will fall.

In a word, Coleridge confronts us with two worlds: one, a world of real objects; the other, a world of mystery, a world intangible, a world of unmoving stabilities, a world which continually impinges on this so-called real and solid world; and both of these worlds meet in man. His purpose is to emphasize this inescapable conjunction. Man's relationships are more than "natural": they are "super-natural."

It is as though Coleridge were saying to us: "You think you can measure life by a yardstick. You think the syllogism is omnipotent. You think that here you have a continuing city. You think you can find a center and a radius, describe a snug little circle, and live within it in peace because there is nothing beyond. And you are wrong. You are a creature of high destiny. Unseen agencies are battling for your soul, as other unseen agencies are seeking to rescue you. Hell and heaven lie equally around you; nay, they are within you, and but a hair divides them. *You have to reckon with a moral order which you did not create and which you cannot escape.*"

Perhaps it will not be inappropriate, even although it anticipates what will later be given the central emphasis, to conclude with a passage from another of the classics of the contending soul. The passage is from the beginning of the account of "The Third Stage" in Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress:*

Now I saw in my dream that the highway up which Christian was to go was fenced on either side with a wall that was called Salvation. Up this way, therefore, did burdened Christian run, but not without great difficulty, because of the load on his back.

He ran thus till he came to a place somewhat ascending; and upon that place stood a cross, and a little below, in the bottom, a sepulchre. So I saw in my dream, that just as Christian came up with the cross, his burden loosed from off his shoulders, and fell from off his back, and began to tumble, and so continued to do till it came to the mouth of the sepulchre, where it fell in, and I saw it no more.

Then was Christian glad and lightsome, and said with a merry heart, "He hath given me rest by His sorrow, and life by His death." Then he stood still a while to look and wonder; for it was very surprising to him that the sight of the cross should thus ease him of his burden. He looked, therefore, and looked again, even till the springs that were in his head sent the waters down his cheeks.

Now, as he stood looking and weeping, behold three Shining Ones came to him, and saluted him with "Peace be to thee!" So the first said to him, "Thy sins be forgiven thee"; the second stripped him of his rags, and clothed him with change of raiment; the third also set a mark on his forehead, and gave him a roll with a seal upon it, which he bade him look on as he ran, and that he should give it in at the celestial gate: so they went their way. Then Christian gave three leaps for joy, and went on, singing:

> Thus far did I come laden with my sin;
> Nor could aught ease the grief that I was in,
> Till I came hither: what a place is this!
> Must here be the beginning of my bliss?
> Must here the burden fall from off my back?
> Must here the strings that bound it to me crack?
> Blest cross! blest sepulchre! blest rather be
> The Man that there was put to shame for me!

Man is a creature who came of creative strife. But he is a distinctive creature. Like every living thing he must battle for existence. But existence for a man is more than merely creaturely existence. He cannot but be concerned with the *quality* of his existence. The necessity that produced him provided also for his power to live in a certain way. That provision is in his very nature. He possesses an inwardness where freedom makes decisions. The decision is between conflicting elements in his own nature. It belongs to him to make good *conscious* and to make evil *conscious*. He cannot do this without reflection, since his decisions are subject

to his own scrutiny, and the scrutiny is guaranteed by conscience. The natural situation therefore gives rise to the human situation necessarily; but the human situation gives rise to the ethical fact, and the ethical fact presupposes freedom and therefore breaks the chain of necessity. But the ethical fact, good and evil made conscious through free decision, and often at the cost of severe struggle, since the choice is between factors equally intrinsic to the nature of the man who makes the choice, may pass over into the religious fact. Religion looks beyond the divided self to the source of life regarded as the source of strength. But this is necessarily a faith, for it supposes that the source of life, and hence the source of the creative strife, is vitally interested in the outcome of the strife, especially as it is carried on in the life of man, and that it gives itself to the cause.

These considerations are not to be treated lightly. Illustrated as they have been above from some of the most familiar elements of our literary heritage, they constitute a body of impressive testimony. It may be that they give a significance to the Christian faith that justifies the claim that this faith enshrines the ultimate truth of existence as this has to do with the life and experience of men.

Chapter VI. RELIGION AS CREATIVITY

WHAT WAS CALLED ABOVE "THE RELIGIOUS FACT" CANNOT BE ignored in any attempt to read and understand existence. Irrespective of the question of a Creator, we must recognize the fact of creativity at work all about us in conditions of opposition. Man is not only one of the results of this creativity, but he is the most important result. He has this importance because he is himself a creator, who carries on the work of creativity in a quite new way, and carries it up to a quite new level. Whatever creativity may be, in creating man it creates a creator. The vast round of human achievement, and the wide diversity of human experience, all spring from the fact that man was made the way he was. His social life, his political life, his aesthetic life, his ethical life, his religious life, are so many forms of reality which depend for their existence upon the prior fact of human nature being what it is.

But this rich and far-extending life that grounds in the creature man does not arise spontaneously. What in nature may be simply a struggle to survive becomes in man a struggle to create. To create, however, involves the meeting and overcoming of opposition. There is always a lion in the way. Only the crushed grape yields the wine. Only through the eye of a needle can the City of Heart's Desire be entered and possessed. The world of reality, which is human experience at the high levels, is creatable not directly, but only as creativity can create the human creator.

We have already dwelt at some length on the place which inwardness, with its quality of freedom, its consciousness of alternatives, its realization of conflicting pressures, its awareness of a direction-imperative, its inevitable feeling-attendant as decisions are reached and choices are made—on the place which this inwardness has in the process of human creativity. Man's power to feel, power to reflect, power to determine, is a prerequisite to whatever new end he may conceive, to whatever new purpose he may project, to whatever more desirable condition he may imagine,

to whatever new imperative he may recognize, in short, to whatever "new creation" he may seek to bring to pass. The best that it belongs to man accomplish, in social organization, in personal character, in aesthetic expression, in supernatural relationships, comes neither by an instinctive automatism nor yet by following a path of least resistance. "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread," is a law of universal application. "If any will not work, neither let them eat," is not a mere "counsel"; it is an inevitability. It was an observant psalmist who wrote: "They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing seed for sowing, shall doubtless come again with joy, bringing his sheaves with him." (126:5-6, A.S.V.) What we have called before "the human tendency to drift" is the tendency to give way to discreativity rather than to work together with the creative.

The ethical is a form of the creative because it brings about a result which increases the area of conscious good. But the ethical may confine itself exclusively to the sanctions which arise within the ethical subject. Man is an ethical subject because he has an inwardness which is characterized by deliberation and judgment, and by an inevitable self-evaluation attendant on the character of the judgment. This does not necessarily call for belief in any superhuman or in any supernatural. An ethic based on the humanistic maxim "Man is the measure of all things" is entirely possible. But it is possible only because human nature carries its own sanctions, and it carries it own sanctions because it carries the makings of the situation which calls for sanctions.

This situation presents a "both-and" option but demands an "either-or" decision. The decision is always liable to inner scrutiny. That liability assures a conflict, and according as the outcome of the conflict receives the inner approval as *right*, there is an augment of creativity, and according as it receives the inner disapproval as *wrong*, there is an augment of discreativity. Worth or value that might have been has failed to be. Unworth or disvalue that ought not to have been has occurred in place of the worth or value. The creative process which is necessarily operative through man has been estopped at the very point where most was at stake, namely, *conscious good*. But since the process need not be estopped, but may be carried forward to the fulfillment of its real purpose, which

is this same conscious good, the human situation is charged with creative ethical significance.

The religious fact involves the human situation precisely as does the ethical fact, but it carries creativity much farther. It does this because it calls for a more-than-human reference. A humanistic ethic there may be, but not a humanistic religion. There are those who would challenge the statement, but it can be challenged only as there is surreptitiously imported into the term "humanistic" a more than human meaning. There can be an ethic which never goes beyond the ethical subject, but there can be no religion which does not go beyond the religious subject. The subject in both cases is a man. The outcome in both cases is an augmentation of created reality, an increase in the worth of existence, a challenge to the evil which is discreativity. But the augmentation which comes through religion has a range which the purely ethical augment does not and cannot have.

Religion is much more than belief in the principle of creativity. Religion is belief in the source of creativity as a source able to respond creatively to such human actions as reverence, worship, prayer, confession, faith. In a word, religion is a sought relation to the Creator himself, and this holds irrespective of the form under which the Creator is conceived. The creative issue of that relation to the Creator in which is constituted the essence of religion is necessarily greater than that which goes with any other form of human relationship. A human relation to anything less than the Creator himself is a relation to something less than the highest. Though such a relation may and will still be creative, it will not represent the full creative possibility.

A suggestion of what is meant here, and an evidence of the truth of the position, is found in the words of the Apostle Paul:

> We make it our aim . . . to be well-pleasing unto him. . . . For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that one died for all, therefore all died; and he died for all, that they that live should no longer live unto themselves, but unto him who for their sakes died and rose again. . . . Wherefore if any man is in Christ, he is a new creature: the old things are passed away; behold, they are become new. (II Cor. 5:9,14-15,17, A.S.V.)

We shall yet need to see how this bears on the teaching in the Fourth Gospel about the necessity of that "rebirth from above" of

which comes "eternal life." A conviction respecting the more-than-human, the effort to conceive that more-than-human as the supreme source of individual and social good, the seeking a personal relation to that source through faith and prayer and love—these are the conditions of "a new creation." Where these conditions are met, there comes into the life and experience of men *a deepening of the quality and meaning of existence not to be secured in any other way*. "A man in Christ," as we shall shortly have reason to see, is not only a religious man; he is a man of a new type, the creative issue of a historical event, namely, the incarnation, sufferings, and resurrection of the Son of God, in which the creative source itself came to a death-grapple with that evil power whose very nature is discreativity. In saying this here we are anticipating, but the statement is simple truth.

Nobody will deny that incredible evils—as we now see them—have been perpetrated in the name of religion. The skeptic has often enough made this an excuse for denouncing the very *idea* of religion. It is deceptively easy to discredit religion—which, to repeat, in its essence is a sought relation to a more-than-human regarded as supremely worthful in itself and the source of worth—by describing certain aspects of the history of religion. The way in which religion affects life, that is to say, the measure of its creativity, depends upon how the religious Object, or "God," is understood. The religious *principle* is the same everywhere; the way in which the religious Object is understood varies enormously. It is that variation which accounts for the variation in the concomitants of religion.

Religion can never come to its full creativity in the life of men until the "Other" with which religion is concerned is known for what he actually is. The profound differences in the way in which men have conceived that "Other," with the corresponding differences in the results, ought at least to suggest the possibility that *it does not belong to man to discover God for himself* because he does not possess the means necessary to that discovery. This in turn suggests the other possibility that *God must be known, if at all, through his own self-disclosure*, this self-disclosure presupposing on man's part the power to respond to it and to accept it. The Christian faith rests absolutely on the fact of this self-disclosure. This must always be the ground for the claim that by

means of a personal relation to God, as he eventually revealed himself in Jesus Christ, men not only become new creations in themselves, but they become the means through which a whole new world of life and action and experience and human relationships replaces, or begins to replace, the old world in which discreative evil was so largely dominant.

This must be the answer to the criticism that religion has been a drag on human progress, and to the claim that "one religion is as good as another." The one certain fact is that human nature is charged with vast possibilities of good and evil, and that religion has a profound significance in respect of those possibilities. Few men have pointed out more devastatingly than David Hume (in *The Natural History of Religion*) the follies which have been committed in the name of some religions. Yet it would be anything but true to say that David Hume was hostile to *all* religion. He was fully aware of the evil which seems everywhere operative in nature and which becomes more destructive as it enters the arena of human life, and he saw no comfort for men save as they could believe in the goodness of God. This, indeed, is the twofold theme of *The Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion*, which Pringle-Pattison says had a deeply serious purpose and grew out of a need on the part of Hume himself to probe to the bottom "the question of God."

One of the most astute attempts ever made in human history to account for the universe without a Creator was made by the Roman philosopher-poet Lucretius, of the last century B.C., in *The Nature of Things*. An infinite number of self-existing and self-moving atoms, differing slightly in shape and size and weight, and operating under an eternal law of necessity, was a sufficient explanation, said Lucretius, of the universe as we know it. One of the motives that led him to his conception was the desire to get rid of religion by getting rid of God or the gods. Or, if there were such beings, they were to be accounted for precisely as all things else are, and consequently they have no special right to control others.

But why did Lucretius wish to get rid of religion? He wished to get rid of it because he saw it only as an instrument of fear, tyranny, and degradation. Early in the poem, he speaks of mankind everywhere "lying in helpless misery under religion." They fear, he says, "her dreadful face," as it "glowers hideously at them from

the upper air." To release men from these unnecessary and irrational fears he regards as a pious act indeed. He particularly specifies the bloody sacrifice of Agamemnon's daughter on the altar of Diana at Aulis, as a propitiation to the gods and to win their support of the Greek expedition aganist Troy:

> They seized the maiden, first-born of the king,
> And bore her trembling to the altar grim;
> This was her long-hoped bridal day,
> But rites hymeneal are far away;
> The priestly office her own sire performs,
> And strikes the blow he must forever mourn;
> He sees the blood gush o'er her tender limbs—
> The gods' exaction for auspicious winds.

Such, says Lucretius, are the crimes performed in the name of religion, and justified accordingly.

The story could be duplicated in a thousand ways. For that matter, it could be duplicated from the Old Testament, in the story of Jephthah's sacrifice of his daughter, his only child, in fulfillment of a vow (Jud. 11:29-40), to say nothing of the story of Samuel's command to Saul, spoken in the name of Jehovah, to extirpate the Amalekites. "Thus saith Jehovah of hosts, . . . Go and smite Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, and spare them not, but slay both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass." (I Sam. 15:2-3, A.S.V.) All that such stories prove is the presence in the world of *a vast power of corruption* which can distort and pervert the deepest thing in human nature —that by which it seeks relation and must seek relation to God.

Lucretius and the skeptics who think with him quite overlook the fact that every capacity of man is subject to corruption. Reason may be corrupted; the aesthetic judgment may be corrupted; the moral judgment may be corrupted, so that men will declare to be good that which at a later time will be recognized as unmitigated evil. Think what the capacity for love may signify, what meaning it may bestow upon human life, what a vast power of creativity it carries. But think also of the crimes that have been committed in the name of love! If Lucretius is right in his claim that the history of religion justifies the complete destruction of religion, then we may with equal right claim that the history of love justifies the complete destruction of love. And who would destroy love?

What is said against religion is said against its perversion, and the fact of that perversion is simply one more aspect of the problem of evil. The roots of religion are in the human soul. There is intended to grow from that rootage a relationship with God which will make the soul an instrument of the creative activity of God. The divine-human linkage is not possible save on the basis of something in God which looks toward man and something in man which looks toward God. But what follows from the linkage with God depends upon how God is understood, and upon the use that man makes of the knowledge. Precisely this point of profoundest significance for the creative activity and purpose of God is the point where the opposition of the Adversary can become most potent.

The only way in which God can be known is by his making himself known. But he has to make himself known according to the conditions of the human situation—and this human situation is the arena for the activity of the Adversary. Where most is being sought, most may be lost. Any divine self-disclosure must be made under the conditions that obtain. How else? It must be made to men. But men are not perfect men. Even "chosen" men are not perfect men. They are caught at the nexus where creativity meets discreativity, where good meets evil, where the Creator meets the Adversary. They are temptable—necessarily. They are corruptible —necessarily. They are fallible—necessarily. That there might come the greatest possible creative good, there had to be a creature through whom might come the greatest possible discreative evil. What can rise so high as a man? And what can sink so low? God is most at the mercy of the Adversary where his purpose is most completely to destroy the Adversary. Nowhere can evil achieve greater victories than in man. Why? Because man must be made in that way which makes such victories possible. His very freedom, which is essential to the increase of the area of conscious goodness, becomes the condition to the increase of the area of conscious evil. The divine dilemma is in the necessity of freedom while yet freedom invests the creative venture with inescapable uncertainty.

What is needed, therefore, is not *no* religion but *right* religion. Human nature is constituted relative to religion; this is the burden of much that has been said above. But because human nature is

thus constituted is itself no guarantee that the religion will be right. A thousand things will conspire to make it wrong. The Adversary does not want men to be rightly religious: he wants them to be wrongly religious. He pits himself against the Creator to bring it to pass that what the Creator wants men to believe about him they will not believe, and what the Creator wants men to do and to be because of the belief they will not do and they will not be.

Whatever that in a man may be which leads him to be religious, its purpose is the enlargement of his life. Life *must* be enlarged, relationships *must* be extended, experience *must* reach to farther horizons, according as the Within comes under the control of the Beyond. But only as the Beyond is rightly understood, and only as the Within is rightly understood, and only as the relation between the Within and the Beyond is rightly understood. To bring about this right understanding is the Creator's purpose, judged by all we can learn about him from his ways with men; and to prevent this right understanding is the purpose of whatever that might be which we are calling the Adversary. Religion used to promote evil, that is to say, to restrict life, to keep it perpetually low, to introduce into it fears, pretenses, insincerities, to make it callous toward the needs of others, to bring life, as the modern saying goes, under an "opiate"—religion used for such a purpose, as it has been and may still be, is evidence to the actuality of the creative-discreative conflict. How can any Eden become a wilderness if it be not for the fact that the very thing that makes Eden actual makes the wilderness possible? But the possibility of the wilderness does not become an actuality *merely* because of man's freedom and his misuse of it: it becomes an actuality because the Adversary can work through that freedom as well as the Creator can.

The religious fact, therefore, whatever form it may take, signifies something about man himself; it signifies something about that "Other" to which in his religion he seeks a relationship; it signifies something about the ways of the Adversary; and it signifies something about the conditions of hazard through which alone the Creator can exercise his creativity at the highest level. Creativity at its highest level is the increase of the area of conscious goodness through the consent and co-operation of the free human spirit. Where can the Adversary of both the Creator and the human

creature be more effectively active in his own behalf than in hindering this increase? For the very means that prevent the increase of the Kingdom of God—to introduce the term—are the means that serve to increase the kingdom of evil. Evil done in the name or religion is so far forth a frustration of the Creator because it involves failure in creativity and triumph for discreativity. The creation of man was the Creator's supreme venture, because it belongs to man, by virtue of the very capacities he must have to fulfill the creative purpose, to give himself to evil as well as to give himself to good. In making souls for himself, and for that which in the New Testament is called "eternal life," God made possible their possession by his Adversary and their coming under the burden of "eternal death." It is evident that he will call upon all his resources to bring about the one and to prevent the other, which is only a way of saying that divine creativity is divine tribulation. If it is by sore travail that man possesses the Kingdom of God, it is by travail no less sore that God comes into possession of the kingdom of man.

What does this mean but that man needs help at the crucial point, namely, that of finding the level he is meant to reach; and that God seeks in every possible way to extend that help? The phrase "in every possible way" is important here. "Every possible way" means the way which is allowed by the total situation. God cannot do *anything* irrespective of the conditions. The conditions limit him as really as they do us, and we shall have to reckon with this fact when we come later to consider the divine sovereignty. In his creating man in the only way that he could, the result was a creature who was made for God but who could never of himself discover God; a creature who could restlessly search for God but who would be baffled in his search by the very nature that impelled him to the search; a creature to whom it belonged to respond to God but who must be confronted by God in his actuality before he could respond as he should. *Confronting men with the actuality of himself* was therefore the problem that God set himself by making man as he did, and the whole history of religion is one long illustration of how difficult a problem it was. And when at last God did show men himself, the fullness of time having come when it could be done, *they answered him with a cross*, and even then did

not see that his endurance of the cross was but *the completion of his self-disclosure.* More of this later.

In his religion, therefore, man reveals himself as a creature bigger than the world of measurabilities and ponderabilities in which he lives, but very much entangled with that world. He feels the lift of the Beyond, while yet his feet drag heavily in the mud. His incurable nostalgia means that he has a home, but his perpetual bafflements mean that he cannot find it. Any man is a possible note in a universal symphony, but never until he has been an actual note in a universal dissonance. He can help create the symphony only as he finds his place. Creativity takes in him, or may take in him, many forms, but by every indication there is one form which determines the value of all the other forms—the social, the aesthetic, the ethical, the political, the economic. That all-determinative form is the religious. Without it, or with that less than it should be, all the other forms of human creativity are short of their fullest possibility.

There is artistic creativity; there is organizational creativity; there is ethical creativity; there is economic creativity; there is political creativity. All of these involve the nature of man; they call for his activity; and they come out of conditions of conflict. All of them call for subjugation. But not one of them is for its own sake alone, not even the artistic, and not even the ethical. Their purpose is the deepening and enriching and perfecting of human life. What these activities and achievements mean for life is the final criterion. But the capacity to be religious is just as intrinsic to human nature as are the capacities which inspire these other activities. Without religion these forms of creativity remain incomplete because they are the activities of incomplete and unfulfilled men. But the religion which is to be the creative accompaniment of all man's creative endeavors is not *any* religion. It must be that religion which fulfills the purpose of religion—the realization of man's true relation to God, and this may not be except as the God who inspires, controls, and transforms the life is *the one true God.* False gods are the instruments of discreativity. Only in that God who is the Creator can man find his true rest and peace.

Herein lies the truth and significance of Schleiermacher's maxim: "All things are to be done with religion." The maxim can be held quite apart from the pantheistic entanglements which Schleier-

macher himself did not entirely avoid. Doing all things with religion implies that religion is not one more of the specific activities in which men may engage. It implies that it is not something to be isolated and set off by itself. Rather, it involves *the total bearing of the total man in his total situation.* Nothing else has this universality. Nothing else can so affect life down to its least detail.

When the first heaven and the first earth were passed away, and when the new heaven and the new earth had at last come to be, John the Seer heard a voice which said: "The tabernacle of God is with men, and he shall dwell with them, and they shall be his peoples, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. . . . I make all things new" (Rev. 21:3, 5, A.S.V.) But the God in question is the God whom John has already described; the God upon whose throne is the Lamb, "as it were slain"; the God who has met and vanquished in a dreadful conflict his adversary the Beast. The men in question—"the tabernacle of God"—are those upon whom had been written "a new name" because they had believed in this God, had worshiped him, had known him, had followed him even to the death. The "new name" bespoke "new men," in keeping with the ancient belief that a man and his name were inseparable parts of one and the same reality, so much so that if the man underwent a radical change of character, outlook, and purpose, his name must be changed accordingly (see Gen. 32:24-30). When God the Creator comes into possession of man the creature, then indeed is the man "a new creation." It is a creation which bespeaks a complete victory over the Adversary. "Old things are passed away; behold, they are become new."

Immanuel, "God-with-us," therefore represents the ultimate human experience, the ultimate victory over demonic discreative evil, the ultimate issue of the divine-human creativity.

Chapter VII. THE HUMANIST DILEMMA

THE MYSTERY OF MAN IS NOT TO BE SOLVED ON THE BASIS THAT "man is the measure of all things." From time to time, however, this solution has been attempted, and the attempt is common in our time. It is not that creativity is denied. Instead, creativity is affirmed as the unmistakable meaning of the cosmic process. Creativity, however, is held to be self-explaining. It is the law of things. Nor is discreativity denied. Like creativity, it is affirmed as unmistakably an aspect of the cosmic process, the other side of the law of creativity, as necessary to creativity as creativity is necessary to discreativity.

Since this is the sufficient explanation, a Creator becomes superfluous, and especially does an Adversary become superfluous. Conflict is undeniable, and it serves constructive ends. Why say more? To suppose that creativity is evidence of a Creator, and that discreativity is evidence of an Adversary, is to ignore the philosophic maxim which declares that "existents ought not to be multiplied beyond necessity." There is room, however, for another philosophic maxim, namely, that "existents for which there is good evidence ought not to be denied on a priori grounds." The Creator is not, indeed, an inevitable deduction from the process of things: faith in his actuality must rest on other grounds than this. Nor is the Adversary an inevitable deduction. But if the Creator, as a deductive probability, becomes, for reasons yet to be considered, a sufficient certainty for faith on which to build both a new life and a new world, then the Adversary, as a deductive probability, may also be regarded as a sufficient certainty with whom men need to reckon.

Humanism, however, when it is not qualified by some sort of adjective, is naturalism, and naturalism proposes to treat nature as the supreme category, and to refuse to consider as real anything held to lie beyond that category. This makes the denial of a Creator inevitable, and if the term "God" be still retained, it

will be to represent some aspect of the natural, for example, the value-aspect or the value-bearing aspect. The same procedure makes it possible for humanistic naturalism to find a place for religion, but the religious reference will still be to some *feature* of the natural "whole," not to that reality upon which this "whole" depends. The attempt of Auguste Comte, in the early part of the last century, to work out a "Religion of Humanity" on the basis of his sociological science, has had numerous followers. Others have substituted for the concept of "Ideal Humanity," which Comte offered as the one true object of worship and devotion, such concepts as law, process, value, meaning, growth of meaning, even evolution. What is common to all these efforts is the supposition that it belongs to man to solve the riddle of existence by taking himself as the standard.

But the supreme mystery for man can never be in that existence which is other than himself. The supreme mystery must be in the man himself to whom the rest of existence is a mystery. *The mystery-maker is a greater mystery than any mystery he finds!* When he has measured all else by reference to himself, he still has not measured himself. The immeasurability of the measurer would be an axiom in any adequate philosophic creed. When a man, after some reflection, and with no least reference to anything beyond the naturalistic whole, affirms that he knows what he is, and what he means, and what he is for, and what his destiny is, he still has not touched bottom, for he still has not said, and on his assumptions he cannot say, *how this could be so.* In a word, when a man undertakes to consider himself in "the light of nature" alone, he is baffled at the very point where the really important questions begin. The more he directs his thought to himself, the more the *real* self eludes him, and the more intolerable the burden of his thought becomes.

The familiar "thought" of Pascal respecting thinking man admits of no contradiction:

> Man is but a reed, the weakest in nature, but he is a thinking reed. It is not necessary that the entire universe arm itself to crush him. A breath of air, a drop of water, suffices to kill him. But were the universe to crush him, man would still be more noble than that which kills him, because he knows that he dies; and the universe knows

nothing of the advantage it has over him. Our whole dignity consists, then, in thought. (*Thoughts*, chap. 2, sec. 10.)

Elsewhere in the same chapter, which is appropriately headed "The Greatness and Misery of Man—Astonishing Contradictions of His Nature," Pascal writes: "What is man in the midst of nature? A nothing in comparison with the infinite, an all in comparison with nothingness: a mean between nothing and all." Again, after dwelling on man's inability to attain certain knowledge and his inability to remain completely ignorant, he writes: "Nothing stops for us. . . . We burn with desire to find a firm seat and an ultimate constant basis, in order to build upon it a tower that shall reach to the infinite; but our whole foundation cracks, and the earth opens to the abyss." Herein is man's misery; but it is again the "thought" of Pascal that man is great in the very fact that he knows he is miserable, for how can a creature be miserable unless he knows it, and how can he know it except he be a thinking creature, therefore greater than what makes him miserable? "All these miseries even prove man's greatness. They are miseries of a great lord, miseries of a deposed king." (Sec. 7.)

Man therefore carries the certainty of his own bafflement, unless he shall receive illumination and unless he shall receive help. This alone is a sufficient refutation of humanistic naturalism, and certainly so when it is offered as a final solution of the mystery of man. No man-made system can be as big as the man who makes it. No system of measurement devised by man can measure the man who devised it. The imponderabilities of the "thinking reed" outweigh the ponderabilities of the universe of mere bulk. So when a man would explain himself, and takes something less than himself by which to explain himself, he still leaves himself unexplained, and this holds whether the explanation be that of Protagoras or Lucretius, of Hobbes or von Holbach, of Mach or Haeckel or Watson. How can a man determine his own significance, seeing that his existence is not of his own will? It is a truism that he must be as he is to mean what he means, but he does not wholly know what he is and therefore he cannot wholly know what he means. His inexplicability is of a piece with his existence. He sees the shadow that he casts, but he cannot wholly see that which casts it. What he calls his knowledge of himself is always an afterthought. He is

his own postulate, but he can never wholly seize it. He cannot escape himself, either in actuality or in thought. His nature is a "given," and he is determined by it in all that he does, but he can never wholly fathom it. The final truth about himself is something he may come to believe, but if it is really this it will have to be declared to him, he will never discover it by his own reflection. Under predestination, in the older theological sense, he may not be: he is predestined nevertheless. He finds that he is a human being, and he can never be anything else. Not only so, but he also finds that he is *this particular human being*—just his own unique distinctive irreplaceable self—and he can do nothing but accept the fact, this fact of himself, as the ground of all his experience, the reason for the world appearing to him as it does. All this was more fully set forth above.

"I am I!" It may be said lightly, as a mere truism; or it may fall from the lips to the accompaniment of sheer terror. When Browning, in *The Ring and the Book*, describes the behavior of Count Guido in his cell, after learning that the pope had refused to mitigate the sentence against him, so that tomorrow the wife-murderer must be publicly beheaded, one feels instinctively that Count Guido is aware of himself as what he really is for the first time in his careless, sensual, self-centered life. Following the appeal to the pope, Guido, confidently expecting release, is reviewing the events of his life, especially the course of his recent trial. He becomes slightly facetious. Suppose, by some mischance, the pope should not relent, and he must die—what then? Well, he may find himself left alone with

> Some such an apparitional dread orb
> As the eye of God.

He asks himself what he shall say to God, and he answers:

> This, if I find the tongue and keep the mind—
> "Do thou wipe out the being of me, and smear
> This soul from off thy white of things, I blot!
> I am one huge and sheer mistake—whose fault?
> Not mine at least, who did not make myself!"

For a long time he continues in this vein. He is pretending to be serious, but actually it is all play. What he has done he supposes he

would do again, did need and occasion offer. In any event, there is always a way out:

> Omniscience sees, Omnipotence could stop,
> Omnibenevolence pardons: it must be,
> From law its fiercest, there's a wink somewhere!

Yes! God, if God there be, will wink, especially at the peccadilloes of a count. What is killing anyhow? Why so much fuss about it? Pompilia is dead, as she deserved to be. The pity is that she did not die sooner: she would have talked that much the less! But killing —certainly a man will kill whatever gets in his way. That's but a proof of manliness! Doesn't one kill an annoying fly? Then why not a wife for the same reason? Why should the pope be so concerned about it, concerned so much that he would even be willing to see *me* killed. So he concludes that "all that was, is, and must forever be," and he declares: "Nor is it in me to unhate my hates." There is no regret, no repentance, only bravado, bravado even when he contemplates the possibility of his being brought before God:

> On earth I never took the Pope for God,
> In heaven I shall scarce take God for the Pope.

But does Count Guido really know himself throughout the long soliloquy? Far from it. All the time he is talking about an imaginary man, not a real man. The real man is yet to be disclosed. And the disclosure comes, in a sudden dreadful moment. He hears footsteps descending the stairs to his cell. It must be the messenger bringing the reprieve from the pope. But there's a psalm! And then he knows. The footsteps are those of the Brotherhood of Death, coming to shrive his soul. The pope has failed him! In that moment Guido sees Guido as he had never seen Guido before, and in a dreadful cry he confesses all his treachery, and calls upon—God!

It was such a moment as the pope had hoped would come. For shortly before, sitting alone, he had pondered Guido's appeal. He begins to soliloquize:

> In God's name! Once more on this earth of God's,
> While twilight lasts and time wherein to work,
> I take His staff with my uncertain hand,
> And stay my six and fourscore years, my due

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Labor and sorrow, on His judgment-seat,
And forthwith think, speak, act, in place of Him—
The Pope for Christ. Once more appeal is made
From man's assize to mine: I sit and see
Another poor weak trembling human wretch
Pushed by his fellows, who pretend the right,
Up to the gulf which, where I gaze, begins
From this world to the next—gives way and way,
Just on the edge over the awful dark:
With nothing to arrest him but my feet.

Long and earnestly the pope ponders before he reaches his conclusion. Then he writes the order for the execution of Count Guido and his companions in crime. Having written the order, he continues his soliloquy:

For the main criminal I have no hope
Except in such a suddenness of fate.
I stood at Naples once, a night so dark
I could have scarce conjectured there was earth
Anywhere, sky or sea or world at all:
But the night's black was burst through by a blaze—
Thunder struck blow on blow, earth groaned and bore,
Through her whole length of mountain visible:
There lay the city thick and plain with spires,
And, like a ghost disshrouded, white the sea.
So may the truth be flashed out by one blow,
And Guido see, one instant, and be saved.
Else I avert my face, nor follow him
Into that sad obscure sequestered state
Where God unmakes but to remake the soul
He else made first in vain.

The pope's desire was realized. Guido in one instant *saw!* But what an instant it was! It was no instant of calm reflection. It was no instant of cold analysis. It was no instant of careful rational deduction. Rather, it was, to use the modern term, an "existential" moment, a moment made possible not by any chain of reasoning initiated by the man, but by the man's inevitable response to the sudden downthrust of God himself. If in that hour Guido saw who and what he was, it was because it was made known to him from beyond himself. The devastating truth came not of Guido, but of God, but it came *to* Guido *from* God because it was the truth which Guido, like every other man, was made to receive, and be-

cause it was God's intent "when the fullness of the time was come," to declare it. Yet what Guido learned in so shattering a moment, and what other men have had to learn in similar moments, and what still other men have failed to learn at all, Guido and these other men could have learned otherwise had he and they been willing to take seriously *a disclosure which lay already to their hand*. This would not have dispensed with the "existential" moment, which is the moment when any man really *sees* his own existence over against the divine existence, realizes how wide a gulf separates them, and realizes that the gulf may be bridged, but only from the divine side; this moment of "crisis" is still to be endured—but with happier concomitants than those that Guido knew.

Actually it is a small matter that a man should read the story of his genesis and of his accumulating capacities as science has written it. The story does not solve the problem which he is to himself, it only helps to state it. A man is still what he is, irrespective of any account of the process whereby he came to be. Nothing can make any different the fact that this man is this man, with this nature, with these capacities, haunted by these voices, subject to these demands, liable at any moment to the awareness of a divine invasion which will shake him to the very depths of his being. One thinks of Francis Thompson's figure of the heart within the heart, the innermost shrine which remains vacant until God occupies it. Only God has the keys of it. Only to God's approach do its gates open. Only by his feet are its floors trodden.

> And if His feet shall rock those floors in wrath,
> Or blest aspersion sleek His path,
> Is only choice it hath.

It is Plotinus' conception again of the Beyond that is the Within. One drops a plumb line into the depths of that Within, but the line runs out and the bottom is not yet reached. Man has no line sufficiently long by which to measure himself. Always he is *there*, whatever he does, whatever he thinks, whatever befalls him. His center he may find, but not his circumference. He is uncapturable by any means he may employ to effect the capture. Himself cannot escape himself. To this extent any man must be a humanist; but just because this is so he must be more than a humanist. When he thinks, he must think as a man; but this man who must think as a

man even when he thinks about God does not thereby reduce God to his own dimensions, or raise himself to the dimensions of God. But the fact that he, a man, a "reed," final outcome of ascertainable cosmic strife, is *able* to think about God, and on occasion—like Guido in his cell, or like Francis Thompson peering into his own troubled heart, or like G. B. Shaw's Blanco Posnet, thief and murderer, giving away to a weary woman the horse upon which his escape from pursuers depended—finds that he *cannot but* think of God, is the assurance that the mystery of him is not explicable in any terms which are *only* human.

This necessity that a man is under to ask questions of himself about himself that he cannot answer is the foundation of skepticism, but it is also the possible beginning of faith. Perchance what he is so constituted as not to be able to *discover,* he is so constituted as to be able to *accept.* What Paul Elmer More called "the skeptical approach to religion" is, in fact, the only approach, if the religion is to have a more-than-human reference. Skepticism is inevitable. It becomes tragic only when, instead of being recognized as a halfway house, it is treated as the end of the human journey. Any man's highest certainty will spring from his deepest doubt.

Thus Browning once more—for the greatest poets are always men of the greatest insight, and if ever a poet had insight, insight into life, insight into the human heart, insight into faith, insight into the ways of God as he both leashes and lashes, it was Browning, and to follow him in his high moments therefore calls for no defense. He writes in "Bishop Blougram's Apology":

> Once own the use of faith, I'll find you faith;
> We're back on Christian ground. You call for faith:
> I show you doubt, to prove that faith exists.
> The more of doubt, the stronger faith, I say,
> If faith o'ercomes doubt. How I know it does?
> By life and man's free will, God gave for that!
> To mould life as we choose it, shows our choice:
> That's our one act, the previous work's his own.

Much that is in this book is concentrated in that last line. Out of the vast interplay of cosmic forces, seemingly so impersonal, seemingly so ruthless, came in due time the creative man. He was child of strife, and was seat of still further strife. The miracle of intelligence, with its concomitant of the inner check lest he believe a lie

and deny the truth, crowned his making. Yet this same intelligence which is his glory is also his bafflement at the one point where bafflement is least tolerable. Then must the personal process stop with defeat? No. And just because of a power resident in the intelligence which elsewhere meets the bafflement. It is the power to believe, the capacity to faith. The intelligence which meets and must meet, which accepts and must accept, the limitations laid upon it by logic, has the faculty of transcending those limitations, not by denying the logic that sets them, but by supplementing the logic-necessity with the faith-capacity, the *logic-necessity and the faith-capacity being alike intrinsic to one and the same intelligence.* A man's one most free act, a venture of faith, is the act for which all the rest of him, all his other powers and the long processes of their making, were but a preparation and are the permanent support.

Yet a venture that may be made may also be refused. Faith is an option, not a compulsion. The pride which is the basic sin may permeate the whole life. Faith requires humility. Self-trust must give way to Other-trust, and pride—a most potent weapon in the arsenal of the Adversary—does not readily yield. It is not an easy thing for a man to do, to confess that he cannot find in himself the answer to himself. Or if he does confess it, there is still the possibility that he will seek the answer in the world itself, on the ground that he is a creature of that world, outcome of a process that can be exactly charted. If only he would bring himself to the point where he would realize that this world, by which he would answer the riddle of himself, is the world as *he* sees it, as *he* understands it, as *he* construes it. A man's world is always *the world of that man.* From that standpoint there are as many different worlds as there are different human beings!

This does not mean that there is not one permanent world which provides the basis for the world as it appears to every man. The truth in all philosophical idealism is in the fact that the world is given only in experience. But any man's experience depends upon that man as its subject. Destroy man as a subject and you destroy the man's experience, and to destroy the man's experience is to destroy that man's world in the only way in which it could exist for him. There is a public world and there is a private world. The private world is the world of the given man. It becomes his because without him it could not exist. No man knows the public

world *as* the public world: he knows it only as it becomes his own private world. If all the private worlds could be destroyed, the public world would still remain—only, in that case, *what of it?*

This is not so much abstraction. This is a very definite and concrete refutation of the so-called common-sense supposition that a man can explain himself by his world. He cannot explain himself by his world for the simple reason that he must first explain his world by himself! He might possibly explain himself by the public world *if he knew all about it,* but this is precisely the one thing he does not and cannot know all about. The public world must become his private world before he can use it for purposes of self-explanation. But in that case his problem is much more how to explain his world by himself than how to explain himself by his world. For what a creator he suddenly sees himself to be when he realizes that out of all that is brought to him through his powers of sight and hearing and touch and the like, and under the action of the laws of his mind, *he creates his experienced world!*

There is danger of subjectivism here, but it can readily be avoided. The danger itself, however, must be incurred in the interests of the actualities of the case. The position does not mean that reality is destroyed: it only means that reality becomes humanly significant only as it passes through the alembic of the human mind. It does not mean that values and disvalues are *purely* human creations: it only means that values and disvalues find a place in man's world and become determinative of man's activity according as they relate themselves to man's inner life. And it does not mean that God has no existence save as the creation of man: it only means that God can have no conscious personal significance for man save as he is given that significance by man himself. God must be believed in to be experienced. So far as a given life is concerned, while it is absolutely dependent on God for creaturely existence, it may go its way as though there were no God whatsoever. This is a practical atheism, and may or may not have a reasoned basis.

But there is also an intellectual atheism. An intellectual atheism is a conclusion arrived at: it represents the conviction that God is not necessary to the world and that he is not necessary to man, and that the denial of God makes no difference either to the world or to man. It undertakes to account for all of man's distinctive capacities, including his understanding, his conscience, his aspirations,

his fears, on purely naturalistic grounds. It makes a like attempt in respect of his religion, and of all the accompaniments of it. It looks at the total human situation in its total cosmic setting, and it says: "The world is sufficient unto itself, and man, offspring of the world and inextricably articulated with the world, is likewise sufficient unto himself."

And what is the answer? There is no answer of such cogency that it cannot be rationally resisted. Man is a mystery. He is a problem to himself, and he is the presupposition of all the related problems. The type of reasoning which has been indulged in above is good reasoning, and it is valid reasoning, but if all it leads to is the probability of God as a logical deduction from the human situation, it is far from giving us what we need. How can men reach God by a logical leap? To treat the world and human life as the major and minor premises of a syllogism, and then to deduce as conclusion, "Therefore, God exists," is still only to arrive at the *God-idea*. There is a difference between the God-idea and the *God-reality*. The reality can never be reached by logic. Assent to the idea of God as the justifiable conclusion of a rational process is very far from being what Brunner calls "the divine-human encounter." An idea may be reached by the leap of logic, but the reality which the idea allegedly represents can be reached only by experience. Men do not believe in God *vitally* by meeting the idea of him: they believe in God vitally by meeting God. Logic may yield God as a hypothesis, but to say that God is *only* a hypothesis, and that he can never move out of the hypothetical realm into the realm of indubitable reality, is simply to deny the validity of a vast body of human experience, and consequently to deny the validity of the truth which alone makes the experience possible and intelligible.

Humanistic skepticism may pass over into humanistic confidence, but humanistic confidence is still confidence in the conclusions a man arrives at about himself, his origin, his nature, his meaning, his possible relationships, his destiny—and confidence in them *simply because they are his conclusions*. This confidence in the man-made may actually be a very impressive thing, and may result in a very high degree of personal character and social devotion. It would be anything but true to say that the humanistic naturalist, whether he stop at skepticism or whether he go on to confidence, is an advocate of life lived at the level of the jungle. In reading himself as he at-

tempts to do, he is conscious of high demands arising from within himself, and often enough he heeds them. Marcus Aurelius in the ancient world and, say, Frederic Harrison in the modern world, had each a light by which to walk, and we gain nothing by denying it. It was Marcus Aurelius who said, "Even in a palace life may be led well," and Matthew Arnold made the saying the theme of a memorable sonnet, with its incisive closing line: "The aids to noble life are all within." Arnold has, indeed, in another sonnet entitled "The Better Part" stated the humanistic ideal in a way not likely to be surpassed:

> Long fed on boundless hopes, O race of man,
> How angrily thou spurn'st all simpler fare!
> "Christ," some one says, "was human as we are;
> No judge eyes us from heaven, our sin to scan;
> We live no more, when we have done our span."
> "Well, then, for Christ," thou answerest, "who can care?
> From sin, which Heaven records not, why forbear?
> Live we like brutes our life without a plan!"
> So answerest thou; but why not rather say—
> "Hath man no second life? *Pitch this one high!*
> Sits there no judge in heaven, our sin to see?
> *More strictly, then, the inward judge obey!*
> Was Christ a man like us? *Ah! let us try*
> *If we then, too, can be such men as he!*"

No one could disapprove such counsel, the premises being as they are. But we still have a right to ask, "Why these premises?" There are two possible foundations for life, a lower and a higher. Arnold's sonnet is directed to someone who chooses the lower, and from that standpoint what is said is truly admirable. But it still remains that the lower foundation is chosen because it justifies itself to humanistic principles as the higher foundation cannot. To deny that there is a second life, a judge in heaven, a more-than-human Christ, is much simpler than to affirm these things, and the denial, the sonnet notwithstanding, carries a much less searching demand than does the affirmation. For the denial still limits life to what can be held within the range of the natural, whereas the affirmation involves the transcending of the limits. And if those limits are not transcended, the problem of man still remains as it was; in fact, it is intensified, for it supposes that an utterly transient creature

is capable of sanctions which make *sense* only if this creature is more than transient, only if he has a reach which sets him off by himself as a focal point of the Eternal.

For if all overnatural reference is taken from man, then any overnatural reference is taken from all that characterizes him, from all imperatives, from all values, from the basic value-making impulse, from all aspiration, from all *mysterium* and its accompanying *tremendum*. This can only mean that humanistic confidence and humanistic highmindedness still remain an insoluble problem. To deepen the problem of man—which is exactly what this confidence and this highmindedness do—is hardly to solve it. To see in the ethical conflict, and in the struggle to make life an incarnation of the ideal, nothing but a continuation of the general cosmic strife, and, worse still, the last stage of that strife, with nothing greater beyond to which it is the immediate preliminary—this is not only to leave the mystery of man exactly as it was, but it is to make out of it an absolute mystery, because now nothing can ever be offered in solution of it.

A man is praying, not as a merely formal exercise, but because he is driven to it by some desperate need, and he cannot forbear. Is that an index, or is it not? If it is an index, what does it indicate? Does it indicate merely that a man finds relief in self-hypnosis, or does it indicate that there is a source of power over and beyond the man himself which prayer may tap? And whether the praying man be a Jacob wrestling mysteriously all night at the ford of the Jabbok; or whether he be King Solomon at Gibeah, earnestly seeking for wisdom to govern his people aright; or whether he be a penitent Psalmist whispering, "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me"; or whether he be a publican, a tax-collector, hating himself for the work he does, and with downcast eyes and with blows of despair upon his breast, groaning, "God be merciful to me a sinner"; or whether he be a man feeling the crushing burden of the world's sin, and on his knees at midnight under an olive tree in a garden that was called Gethsemane—whichever of these he be, he prays, and he prays because he must, and his prayer is not in vain.

Does it mean nothing except what the humanist says it means? Does it mean that a man is deceived by the deepest thing that is in

him? Does it mean that what a praying man takes for a word from God is nothing but the hollow echo of his own voice?

It may mean that. But then again it may not mean that. It may, instead, mean *God*—the actuality of him, his approachability, his availability, his heart of love beating out its music to inspire and animate valiant souls as they fight the good fight of faith. It may mean that.

But why the half-hesitation? Why the uncertain "may?" There is a better answer. The better answer is: *It does mean that.* We know that sincere prayer creates a bond between the soul and God. We know it because *God has told us about himself*, and such a God as he has disclosed himself to be will not only seek men but will lead men to seek him.

And in the conflict which life must always be, "he is not far from each one of us," seeing that our Adversary is his Adversary and our cause his cause.

> Thrice blest is he to whom is given
> The instinct that can tell
> That God is on the field, when he
> Is most invisible.

Part Two

THE CREATOR AS PARTICIPANT

The Chapters

VIII. The Creator Speaks for Himself
IX. The Adversary
X. In the Beginning—and Since
XI. The Challenge to Mortal Combat
XII. The Creator Under Necessity
XIII. The Creator Under Freedom

Chapter VIII. THE CREATOR SPEAKS FOR HIMSELF

For those who accept it, Christianity means that the existence of God is not a mere surmise, not a mere probability, but a certainty which God has himself established. It means, however, more than the certainty of the existence of God: it means also certainty concerning his nature, his character, and his purpose, especially his purpose with men. The means whereby this certainty has been established is a revelation, and a revelation of a very special kind.

Christianity sees this revelation as the climax of a process of a more general character and therefore less definite in its significance. The claim that men have been able to learn nothing of God except what he has disclosed along a narrow corridor of history cannot possibly be harmonized with what in one great final Act he disclosed himself to be. If that final Act is Christ, so that to see God in and through Christ is to see God as he would have men see him, then all the ways of God in creation and in history are to be read in the light of this final Act. God in Christ is seen as Holy Love, and the measure of Holy Love is in its complete self-giving in behalf of men. We cannot stand at the beginning of the process of revelation, and from that beginning forecast the end. Nor can we forecast the end from any given point along the process. We can understand the process only when it comes to completion. We can understand what God was trying to say only when he has at last actually said it.

Because the standpoint of Christianity is determined by the process of revelation brought to its climax, it is able to yield a comprehensive survey of the ways of God and in some measure see their significance. Christianity affirms a revelation of God in creation, that is, in the whole story, written or unwritten, of the life of man upon the earth, yes, and even of that life that preceded the life of man and helped to make possible its coming. It affirms that this

general story, including as it does all social growth, all ethical experience, all art, all science, all religion, is in its turn clarified and supplemented by a particular phase of history, namely, the history of the people of Israel, integrated as it was with the history of its neighbors, and acting as it did as the *milieu* of a body of religious conviction and experience of a quite peculiar kind. It affirms that this particular section of history, with its marked ethical and religious significance, was not only clarified and supplemented but was brought to a point of absolute climax in Jesus Christ, who was sent into the world for this very purpose. And it affirms, finally, that as God-revealed-in-Christ comes increasingly into control of the lives of believing men, the meaning of what was revealed becomes more and more evident, its application to life becomes more and more redemptive, and the actuality of the revelation becomes more and more authenticated.

In a word, Christianity as vital religious faith means that God has spoken for himself. The question of God is no longer a question of human cogitation on the meaning of this or that. It is no longer a question of the reliability of certain vague intuitions. It is no longer a question of syllogistic reasoning, with the related problem of how to get the major premise. It is no longer a question of the ability or otherwise of the finite minds of men to comprehend the infinite. It is no longer a question of the incompatibility of the contradictions of existence with the attempt to read them as pointing to a common source.

It is not that these are no longer questions in any sense. They will continue to be questions just as long as the mind of man endures in conditions such as now obtain. *Surrender to the revelation does not settle everything.* But it settles some things, and it settles them forever. To believe that God has spoken in the way declared is to settle the fundamental question of the actuality, the nature, the character, and the purpose of God. What from any other standpoint and through any other approach can never be anything more than a probable solution of a problem, a final leap of logic from idea to reality, is from this standpoint and through this approach a conviction of certainty. This certainty is what chiefly matters, but it can never mean that henceforth the Christian man has no further need to use his mind! Oftentimes, indeed, the Christian's greatest struggle is the struggle to hold to this certainty. If

anybody thinks that the Christian holds his faith without a tremor, he is simply confessing that he himself never tried to hold it. When men said of Dante, "There goes a man who has been in hell," they were not speaking of a remorseful libertine who thought of God only when it was too late. They were speaking of a man who looked the way he did—"like a man who had been in hell"— just because he believed in God as he did. When Tennyson links together in a single line "our dearest faith" and "our ghastliest doubt," there are those who know what he means. Not for nothing have men spoken of "the dark night of the soul." Arthur Hugh Clough, pondering some easier and lower way, could remind himself,

> I have seen higher, holier things than these,
> And therefore must to these refuse my heart,

But he was still constrained to confess,

> Yet am I panting for a little ease;
> I'll take, and so depart.

That "little ease"—who does not know what it means? An easing of the demand that comes of faith. An easing of the effort to keep the loyalty undimmed. An easing of the loneliness to which on occasion a man is driven by his faith. An easing of the taxing task laid upon the mind as it seeks to follow the light of faith into the dark recesses of thought. The certainty of God answers one great question, but the man of faith must still live in the world as it is, he must still face the raw facts of experience as they arise in the natural and social orders. It may be that at some points he commits himself to far sterner struggle, intellectual and moral both, than is ever required of the man who has no such faith, and who, as he listens, hears nothing but

> an ever-breaking shore
> That tumbles in the Godless deep.

If men have gone on to faith from indifference and doubt, men have also passed from faith to indifference and doubt. Not with debased coinage may one obtain entry into the City of God, and not without continued price may one remain therein.

Faith that God speaks begins with faith that he once spoke; in

particular, it begins with faith that he once spoke in the manner enshrined in the Scriptures. But unless faith that God once spoke is completed in the faith that God still speaks—speaks here and now to me—faith that he once spoke avails little enough. It is not *that* faith that a man will sometimes be in sore travail to keep. It is faith in the *now-speaking* God. It is faith that over against this present reality of the world, with its sin and degradation and sorrow and pain, over against this present personal experience of frustration, tribulation, treachery, abandonment, stands a vast reality of holy love, steady, persistent, never-retreating, of all actualities the most factual, of all certainties the most certain, of all dependabilities the most dependable. *A God who, having once spoken, was heard by others, who so testified, and having once spoken still speaks as he spoke then, so that I too hear him as they heard him*—this is the crucial fact. This is foundational. This is the victory of faith that overcomes the world. This is that "divine-human encounter" which Brunner makes elemental. This is what even a cross need not deny but may mightily confirm, but it is what a cross *may* deny unless it is endured even unto the end.

Has God disclosed himself to us, and is the self-disclosure such as is described in the Scriptures, so that it is by this description that all other alleged forms of divine self-disclosure are to be judged? This is obviously the issue, and it is an issue of supreme importance for mankind.

In Plato's dialogue the *Phaedo*, after Socrates, who is about to drink the hemlock, has been discussing the question of immortality, and the uncertainty which necessarily attaches to all men's speculations about the ultimate questions of life, Simmias, a friend of Socrates who has taken part in the discussion, is represented as saying that all we can do is take the best that men have come to believe about these questions, and trust ourselves to them as to a raft, knowing how insecure the raft must be, unless it shall happen that we come into possession of a Word of God, by which we may go forward happy and secure. (See 85.) The words were often quoted in early Christian apologies as indicating the absolute human need for a revelation—"a divine word"—if men were not to be left permanently in the dark on the questions which most concerned them.

There is still no better presentation of the case from the Protes-

tant point of view than that of John Calvin as he states it in his *Institutes of the Christian Religion.* Luther was less committed to the *letter* of Scripture than was Calvin, which is one chief reason why the Lutheran view has been able to adjust itself more readily to modern critical study of the Scriptures than has the view of Calvin. But as respects the situation which gives rise to the *need* of revelation and which justifies men in believing in the *actuality* of revelation, Calvin is still a worthy guide.

It is axiomatic with Calvin that man's knowledge of himself and man's knowledge of God are parts of the same whole. The basis of this knowledge is a certain divine-human mutuality. Man is made in the image of God, and this fact is a bond uniting man and God. If the bond could have remained intact, according to the original divine plan and purpose, then man would have been able to know sufficient of himself and of God to live according to the divine will. But pride led man to disobey. He was not content to remain under God. He aspired rather to be equal with God. He would determine his own life in his own way. He would be his own master, recognizing no other.

His attitude at once set him in opposition to God. This involved the surrender of the normal law of his life. The normal law of his life would have kept his understanding, or reason, and his will, in such a relation to God that knowledge of God's will and obedience to God's will would have continued unimpaired. But the normal law was surrendered, and the result was a devastating effect upon both the understanding and the will. In what had become an abnormal situation—and every man by reason of his very nature finds himself in that abnormal situation—a true knowledge of God and a true self-knowledge ceased to be possible.

Yet what had become impossible to man still represented what man desperately needed. He neeeded to know God, and he needed to know himself according to the divine intent.

It was not that the image of God had been entirely destroyed. Had it been, man would have become a being entirely unaware of his own need, and by consequence entirely unable to respond to the divine approach. The distorted image of God is still the basis of man's consciousness of his predicament, and it is still the basis of the possibility of a divine self-disclosure. A fundamental relation of man to God which not even sin could entirely destroy

kept open the way through which God could even yet reach man's soul. When certain modern "crisis" theologians insist upon the separation between man and God being *absolute*, so that only by smashing his way through can God get at a man, they are certainly losing sight of Calvin's conception of a divine-human mutuality as the necessary basis of any means that God may employ to release man from the devastating results of sin.

The very fact of universal morality and universal religion is the evidence, in Calvin's view, to a kinship of man to God which is already a form of revelation, and the presupposition to that more complete revelation which is indispensable if what the distorted image of God indicates, namely, the possibility of its restoration, is to be brought about. The light is never entirely extinguished: this is Calvin's conviction. That flickering glimmer does not provide man sufficient light by which to walk. But it does make him aware of his own need; it does keep him reminded of what light really is; and it does provide the spark by which God creates that lambent flame in whose glow both God himself and man stand clearly disclosed. "In his light shall we see light."

What the situation in which men find themselves calls for, and what can be found in no other way whatsoever, the Scriptures declare has been actually provided. *God has spoken, and this is what he has said: this therefore is what God is, and this therefore is what man is.* In such a statement the import of the Scriptures is gathered up and expressed. The Scriptures are sufficient for the purpose for which they were given, namely, to bring to men a knowledge of God and of his will and ways: so Calvin—and, indeed, so every man to whom it has been given to realize for himself that the Word of God is a lamp for his path and a light for his feet.

How do we know? One answer is that we know because the Church says so. The truth of the revelation conveyed through Scripture is authenticated to men by the pronouncement of an authoritative ecclesiastical hierarchy. If we inquire what makes that hierarchy authoritative, we are told that the authority comes from God. If we ask who says that the authority comes from God, we are told that the hierarchy itself says so. There are those who see no difficulty in the circularity of the argument. There are others who will feel that what Calvin says about it is absolutely convincing.

Calvin declared that *no pronouncements of men can ever authenticate the Word of God to other men.* Any church is composed of fallible men. They may be ever so saintly, ever so devoted, ever so learned, but they are still fallible men. They still need to hear the Word they presume to judge. They can have no right, intrinsic or delegated, to determine what must be the message of God to a human soul.

What, then, is the other answer to our question? It is the answer which Calvin, and many others with him, expressed in the conviction of a *testimonium Spiritus Sancti.* Only God can attest God to men. The self-revelation of God declared through the Scriptures is its own authority, and it cannot be made authoritative by anything else not itself. The soul that does not accept it for what it is simply does not accept it. The Scriptures are the Word of God only to those who accept them as such, and to those who thus accept them they attest themselves. This attestation bespeaks the activity of the Holy Spirit. Through the Scriptures approached as they should be, the Spirit that spoke in the first place speaks again. "Deep calleth unto deep." The written word is vehicular, and what it conveys is the Word of God, but this Word of God is conveyed only if the conditions are met. Two different persons may read, say, the Fourth Gospel, and to one it proves to be the Word of God, and to another it never rises above the level of the words of men.

"It is necessary," wrote Calvin in the *Institutes*, "that the same Spirit who spake by the mouths of the prophets should penetrate into our hearts." (Bk. I., chap. 7, sec. 4.) And again:

> Let it be considered, then, as an undeniable truth, that they who have been inwardly taught by the Spirit, feel an entire acquiescence in the Scripture, and that it is self-authenticated, carrying with it its own evidence, and ought not to be made the subject of demonstration and arguments from reason; but it obtains the credit which it deserves with us by the testimony of the Spirit. For though it conciliate our reverence by its internal majesty, it never seriously affects us until it is confirmed by the Spirit in our hearts. Therefore, being illuminated by him . . . we esteem the certainty that we have received it from God's own mouth by the ministry of men to be superior to that of any human judgment, and equal to that of an intuitive perception of God himself in it. We seek not arguments or probabilities to support our judgment, but submit our judgments and understandings *as to a*

thing concerning which it is impossible for us to judge. . . . Whenever, therefore, we are disturbed at the paucity of believers, let us remember that none but those to whom it was given have any apprehension of the mysteries of God. (*Ibid.*, sec. 5.)

This was, in substance, the view of Martin Luther, who had proved it in his own experience while he was yet a monk and before he had posted his theses on the church door at Wittenberg, and who had it mightily confirmed to him during his imprisonment in the Wartburg Castle, as he worked on his translation of the Scriptures into the vernacular of the German people. It was, in substance, the view of John Wesley at a later time, as, indeed, it has been the view of all the great leaders of Protestantism. A mechanical literalism in respect of the Scriptures is not the true Protestant view. Rather, it is a perversion of that view. The unhappy controversies which have centered in such a literalism would have been impossible if Christian people had not overlooked the crucial significance of the *testimonium Spiritus Sancti.* It is only when what the Scriptures disclose concerning God, his nature, his character, and his will, evokes a response in the heart that the conviction arises that what is disclosed is *absolutely so.*

The mere affirmation, therefore, that God has spoken for himself, and that the evidence to this is in the Scriptures, may or may not be significant for a given person. If he chooses to deny it, there is no way whatever of demonstrating that he is in error. Since the Bible is, in part, a record of history, it is, of course, possible to subject this history to the usual processes of verification. But proving or disproving the accuracy of biblical history leaves quite untouched the question of the validity of the alleged divine self-revelation made through this history.

One of the problems of any student of the Old Testament is in the marked differences between the accounts of the reigns of David, Solomon, and other later kings of Judah, as these are found in the books of the Chronicles, and the accounts of the same reigns as these are found in the books of Samuel and Kings. Any honest person will frankly recognize the fact of these differences, but to go on to infer that the Bible is therefore "not true" is to be guilty of judging the significance of the Bible by the very tests which ignore that significance. The Bible is to be judged according to the purpose for which it exists. It exists as an instrument of the Spirit

of God to confront men with God. This purpose of confrontation can never be, as Calvin frequently declared, a matter of syllogistic demonstration. If a man will not believe, then he does not believe, and because he does not believe, nothing happens. But if he does believe, it happens. He receives an inner assurance that God is speaking to him, and that the God who speaks is such a God as he is here declared to be.

It is in this way that the Word and the Spirit operate conjointly. The Word that came by the Spirit in the first place must be apprehended by the Spirit. This is the chosen method of the divine procedure. To use the terms, it is in the union of the objective (the Word as written) and the subjective (the Spirit) that the purpose of the Word as written is fulfilled, namely, the flooding of the soul with the revelation of God, with the consequent capture by the revelation of the whole personality, mind, heart, and will. To attempt to be led by the Spirit without reference to the Word is likely to result in the wildest sort of vagary. To use the Word as other than what it is and for purposes other than that for which it was given, is to use it without reference to the Spirit, and so to fail to see in what sense it is the Word of God.

The position is clearly stated in the recent work of Emil Brunner, already referred to, translated as *The Divine-Human Encounter*. The Bible means, says Brunner, that God is known only in a personal correspondence, an actual concrete encounter. God and the man *meet*—meet, as the term has it, "existentially." The Bible witnesses to this, and describes its conditions and its results. The meaning of the Bible, however, is fulfilled not simply by an assent to the witness, but by a personal duplication in experience of what is witnessed. *If God does not reveal himself to me, it is of small significance that I assert my belief that he once revealed himself to others.* The reality of God is his reality as experienced. The *verbal* assent to the revelation is not sufficient; how can it be? There must be a *vital* repetition of it, and this means nothing less than "a divine-human encounter," which carries its own authentication to him who experiences it. All this is entirely in keeping with essential Protestantism. Thus to quote Calvin once more:

> The Scripture will only be effectual to produce the saving knowledge of God, when the certainty of it shall be founded on the internal persuasion of the Holy Spirit. . . . It is impossible to demonstrate to

unbelievers that the Scripture is the Word of God, which cannot be known without faith. (Bk. II, chap. 8, sec. 13.)

The Scriptures, however, are not only a means whereby the human soul may find itself confronted with God, made aware of his actuality, and rendered certain of his availability to inspire, to strengthen, to deliver, and to transform. Men who knew nothing of the Hebrew-Christian scriptures have still believed that they were confronted with God. Besides the questions of the *fact* of God, therefore, are the questions of *what manner* of being he is, what is his relation to the course of events, what is his purpose, what is his will for men, and what are the ways by which he seeks to accomplish his purpose and to have his will fulfilled. The Scriptures instruct us concerning these related questions. If they did not, much that is distinctive of the Christian religion would disappear. The Christian religion is not distinctive merely by reason of its God-reference, since all religions have such a reference. What makes the Christian religion distinctive is the character of the God to whom it has reference. God has not simply spoken *for* himself, to attest that he is indeed God: he has also spoken *about* himself.

Nothing that is said in the important discussion in Rudolf Otto's *The Idea of the Holy* must be allowed to obscure this distinctive element. We can be entirely sympathetic with Otto's emphasis on the "wholly otherness" of God; on his transcendence of all merely human categories; on his inconceivability; on his incomprehensibility; on his august majesty, and the like. But if this is all that is allowed to us, then truly is God *mysterium tremendum et fascinans*. This aspect of the divine is, indeed, not to be forgotten: no truly Christian soul can ever treat God "familiarly," or talk about him as though he were simply one more existent among many existents. The Scriptures themselves, taken seriously, would prevent this, and Otto has no difficulty in showing that throughout Christian history this "numinousness" of the divine has been amply recognized.

But is still remains that it is the very meaning of Christianity that God "comes near," both that he might possess us and that we might possess him. The Scriptures *characterize* God, that is, ascribe to him qualities, purposes, relationships, activities, which make him real to us in a way that would not otherwise be possible. He is

described in such a fashion as makes it possible for us, so to speak, to lay hold upon him. It is customary to treat this as so much "anthropomorphism," which means talking about God according to the forms agreeable to human experience. No one will question that this is what is done; in fact, it must be done. How else can men think and speak about *anything* except as men? But it does not follow that the "anthropomorphic" terms are misleading. They suggest to us how God desires us to think about him, and God cannot desire us to think about him according to what he is not! No terms that we can apply to God are exhaustive of his reality; what they do is to serve to make him real to us.

This is why we may speak of the Christian *conception* of God. The Christian conception of God means God held before the mind according to the forms called for and justified by the revelation itself.

Thus, according to the Christian understanding and formulation of the revelation, God is Creator. It is because of his will and purpose that there is an ordered universe. He is in his essential nature a Personal Fellowship of Holy Love and the constituents of this Fellowship are described as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. He has made man in his own image, because it is with man that he is supremely concerned. He orders the course of the world with continual reference to his will for man. He seeks to bring every man into a relation of sonship to himself and brotherliness toward his fellows. His regard for men is not merely general, but particular. He opposes himself to all evil, wherever found and whatever form it takes, although on occasion he uses evil to serve his ends. By the power of his Spirit he would make out of every man a new creature and he would bind men together in a new society, called the household of faith or the Kingdom of God. A man is made a new creature according as he comes under the domination of self-giving love, and this same self-giving love is the creative power of the new society. His own holy love is such that he will not willingly let men go, and he has given the supreme evidence of that love in the entry into our human lot of his own eternal Son, known among men as Jesus Christ. According as men, in penitence, faith, and obedience, surrender to the holy love that was thus manifested, the purpose of God the Creator, who therein discloses

himself as not only Creator but also as Redeemer, approaches its realization.

This Bible testimony respecting God and man is admittedly entangled with what is local, capricious, evanescent, purely contemporary, the accidentally vehicular. But what is permanently significant in it may be disentangled, in the way just suggested, from these contingent associations, and then considered from the one standpoint—although other standpoints are permissible—of its bearing on the persistent problems of man's life. The testimony may still be rejected, because its ultimate authentication can be referred to nothing outside of itself; but it is not to be rejected merely because of its historical origins, its historical setting, and its historical expressions. It may be repeated under entirely different conditions and in entirely different ways. *What matters is its repeatability and its abiding verisimilitude.* No change in the vessel, no criticism of alleged defects in the vessel, can change or destroy the treasure. It offers itself for what it is, and it is to be accepted or rejected for what it offers itself as being, and for no other reason whatsoever. The essential truth is separable from the historical conditions in which it was first given, which at least makes it reasonable that it may be deemed intelligible, authentic, convincing, and applicable in other historical conditions of a radically different kind.

If, therefore, we can disentangle the essence of the revelation from the historical conditions by which it came and which are preserved in the record, we arrive at a *norm* which will hold anywhere else in the world. The self-disclosure of God, with which the record deals, is as significant for the twentieth century as it was for the first century. The *conditions* have changed almost beyond description. Much of the way in which the biblical story is told has become almost unintelligible except to the occasional expert. But the *theme* of the story is germane to social and cultural conditions of a different kind. Much of the alleged "difficulty" that the modern man finds with the Bible is due to a simple failure of discrimination. The revelation was conditioned by certain characteristics in the men to whom it came; and the significance assigned to it, the use made of it, the form in which it was preserved —these likewise were conditioned by the culture of the time and place. Any student of the Old Testament knows how profoundly

the experience of the Exile modified the way in which the religion of Israel was expressed. Yet a profound faith persisted throughout all that change. If the elaborate Priestly Code came out of the Exile, it is also true that the writings of Isa. 40–66 came out of the same Exile.

Historical conditions therefore, while they provided the *milieu* of revelation and profoundly modified its expression, *did not create the revelation.* God is working in his own way through these conditions. Sometimes the conditions helped the purpose, and sometimes they hindered it—as they do still. Always the Adversary was active. Always God must "strive to enter in." This is still the case: our concern is to understand through the biblical record who this God is who is striving to enter in. All the diverse happenings have ultimate reason in the free purpose of a free Creator. Grant the purpose, and the processes judged necessary to it may be held to follow, and the amazing variety of the processes, even their apparent contradictions, their repeated oppositions, their palpable contingencies, may still be regarded as falling within the vast orbit of the purpose. The free is set within the framework of the ordered.

It is, however, the implication of the total biblical record that the opposition to the fulfillment of the divine-human mutuality does not arise exclusively or even fundamentally from the free will of men. Ideally, man is an instrument of the will of God. Actually, he is as well an instrument of some dark demonic force. *God and the Adversary strive together through man for the possession of man.* In the New Testament especially this striving is decribed in "thought forms" which were distinctive of the time. A case in point is Paul:

> Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rules of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. (Eph. 6:10-13.)

Undoubtedly Paul is here making use of the Gnostic dualism. The Gnostics endeavored to chart the evil forces operative in

existence. The question is not at all that of the accuracy of the chart. The question is that of *the reality of the opposition* against which the soul must strive, an opposition which becomes the more pronounced according as the soul becomes more committed to Christ.

Always, therefore, as we pursue our way through the Scriptures, our purpose must be to ascertain the revelation, since this alone is the true Word of God. Here we find the significance of Christ. Taking him as the final revelation, we can say that God seeks to make holy love regnant in the life of men, that he does this because he is himself holy love, and that it is not until the reality and the depth and the power of that holy love are disclosed in an Act supremely sacrificial—the self-emptying, the humiliation, the obedience even to the point of the death by a cross of the very Son of God (see Phil. 2:5-11)—it is not until then that the regnancy of holy love in human experience, and the sole way for the achieving of that regnancy, are likewise disclosed. That same Act of God which shows us God shows us also what God seeks, and the seeking pertains to us because it is to us, *the creatures of his power now seen as the objects of his love,* that the disclosure is made. *This* is God, and *this* is his purpose, and *these* are his ways: all are made clear in one and the same Act, and their unity is unmistakable. To know God is Christ is to know all else that we need to know respecting the meaning of our existence and the possibilities of our experience.

That the conception now set forth raises numerous questions is self-evident. Its relation to the Scriptures themselves, to Christian history, to the whole manifold of existence, both nonhuman and human, is a challenge to the Christian intelligence. These questions are to be dealt with to some extent in what follows.

There is one question, however, which looms up with peculiar insistence. It is the question of the relation between such a God, having such a purpose, working in such ways, possessed of such resources, and all those dark aspects of existence, part and parcel of his own creation, which seem to deny the reality of this God.

The revelation itself, and the forms in which it is recorded, gives us some light. The very fact that the revelation came in the way it did, and for the purpose it did, indicates the presence and activity of a hindering power. In the revelation as recorded there is a frank

recognition of the fact of this hindrance. God is carrying out his will in conditions of opposition. He meets continual frustration. He is under necessity of waiting his time. He moves forward in pursuit of his purpose not with unbroken rhythm but as one who must find his way through stubborn resistance strategically deployed. The march of God through the fields of Time is not an unbroken triumph. He battles for what he seeks, and the only assurance that faith has that his triumph will finally come is that *he has more to give than can be given by his Adversary, and that he gives it.*

It is necessary to consider this question, and to attempt to say something definite about it, before undertaking any further elucidation of the revelation and its record.

Chapter IX. THE ADVERSARY

ANY PERSON WHO TAKES TO HIMSELF THE DIVINE SELF-REVELATION, as it has now been described, finds that it is a light by which he may confidently walk. It settles for him certain insistent questions. But it still leaves him with many others. They are questions of correlation, questions of interpretation, and questions of application.

The conditions that characterize existence do not change because a man comes to believe in the reality of a God of holy love, and because he believes that the reason for creation itself lies in the will and purpose of such a God. In one sense, indeed, his very faith may serve to deepen his perplexity. For the one thing that seems certain is that there are aspects of existence which can never be understood as expressing the direct activity of the creative will of a God of holy love. It is true that there are other aspects of existence and various dreadful forms of human experience which are due to the exercise of the human will. But even here we cannot establish a complete equation. Sin is not a sufficient explanation of the evils of life. Sin is one more of the evils, and often enough it is an avoidable form, but some of the worst sins ever committed far exceeded the deliberate intention of the persons involved in them, just as the consequences far exceeded anything they could possibly have imagined. We have already insisted on the reality of human freedom, but recognizing the fact of freedom does not mean that we can now trace to it the whole sum of human ills.

Nor can we trace it to the will of God, if the God we are concerned with is that God who finally disclosed himself in Jesus Christ. We must recognize the presence in Christian history of a type of thought which connects the entire human race with the "fall" of "Adam," conceived as the first man and the only free man. The condition of men and of the world in which they live is a consequence of that "fall," the consequence being, however, not of the will of Adam, but of the will of God. The one event in

human history from which God separated himself was the primal act of disobedience. At that point Adam was utterly free and unrestrained, but not thereafter. God himself ordained the results of that disobedience. These results reached out into the whole creation, particularly into the life of men. Therefore the condition of the world and the condition of mankind represents the will of God the Creator *as that will reacted to the first man's disobedience.*

This was the view of Augustine, and, in more recent times, of John Calvin and certain of his followers. Those who accepted the view regarded it as scriptural. Especially did they believe that they found support for it in the Epistle to the Romans. It is one of the tragedies of biblical interpretation that the difficult argument of Paul in Rom. 5-8 was so often not read in the light of the total Christian revelation. Paul had a very definite purpose in that argument, namely, to show that in Jesus Christ deliverance was offered to sinful men. He tells how sin came: it came with the coming of human life. There was no sin until there was a man, because there could be no law against sin until there was a man to whom the law could be made known. But Paul nowhere even suggests the possibility that what happened need not have happened. In the long section, 7:9-25, while Paul speaks all the time in the first person, he is not simply talking about himself: he is talking about *any man.* Any man is under "the law of the flesh" whence comes sin, and could not otherwise exist. Adam was under it. The commandment made it known to Adam, as it does to any man, that he should not obey the law of the flesh, but the commandment did not give him power to rise above that law. "The law entered, that the offence might abound."

"Adam" is therefore not simply the first man, the race-man who in one moment set the destiny of countless millions of descendants. "Adam" is every man. The story of Adam is every man's story. What Paul called the "law in my members warring against the law in my mind, and bringing me into captivity," was "warring" in Adam, and it was because of that "warring" that he came, as every other man does, "into captivity." No man is a sinner just because "Adam" was—with the implication that if Adam had not sinned, sin, death, and all evil would never have entered the world. A man is a sinner because he is a man, and because as a man he is the seat of conflict, and because the knowledge of the commandment

of God is not sufficient of itself to insure his obedience of it. "Adam" is typical, not determinative. The world into which he came was a world just like the one we know. The "nature" he brought with him was just like the "nature" we have. All the dreadful speculations of Augustine about "the transmission of guilt" were based upon a profound misapprehension. All that a human being can possibly inherit is "human nature," and human nature, seat at once of "the law of the flesh" and "the law of God," which is conscience, carries the inevitability of conflict and the certainty of defeat, as it did "in the beginning." The "law of sin" is inseparable from human nature. We shall return to this question at a later time.

We must therefore look elsewhere than to a single historical event, or than to the fact of "freedom of the will," for those causes which make the world as it is and men as they are. Even if a person insists on finding the clue in the Garden of Eden narrative, he is driven further afield than a single fateful human decision. He cannot—or should not!—overlook the fact of the presence of the Serpent in the garden. It does not matter how the Serpent is interpreted, *it stands for evil,* which means that evil was in existence before Adam disobeyed. Eve tempted Adam, but not until already Eve had been tempted by the Serpent. Both Adam and Eve were temptable; they were created temptable just as much as we are; the very command to abstain from "the tree of the knowledge of good and evil" was evidence of their temptability; and their temtability was evidence that they were not "perfect." A perfect man would be untemptable, because a perfect man could not even consider the possibility of doing what he knew was wrong. In a word, even on the basis of this narrative there was evil before there was sin. It was that very evil that made sin possible, and when an absolute commandment of God was laid upon a temptable and fallible human person, that evil would make sin even inevitable. How could it ever be held that "the Bible teaches" that evil came through man's sin when it was because of an already existent evil, both in human nature and in the world itself, that sin itself came to be?

Such an understanding of the matter is certainly in agreement with the modern scientific view of natural processes. This is by no means the primary consideration: the primary consideration

is loyalty to the revelation and its requirements. But the revelation nowhere requires us to give the story of the "fall" the significance it has often had in Christian theology. On the contrary, there is very much in the revelation, as it bears upon the world and human life, which has a strange congruity with such theories as pluralistic evolution, creative evolution, emergent evolution, and the like.

The modern mind attempts to look at the course of existence with a certain detachment, and it has been led to certain conclusions: for example, that the course of existence is attended by strife, frustration, and destruction, irrespective of what its alleged "beginning" may have been; that man not only comes out of this strife, himself the issue of titanic conflict, but is inextricably involved in it in ways often more subtle, more cruel, more tragic, more devastating, than anything that nature itself can show; and that while at many points his freedom is a complicating factor, and in any event is indispensable to his ultimate deliverance, more often than not the course of existence involves him in all manner of evil, not because of his will but in spite of it.

He would be blind, therefore, who should suppose that the problem of evil, including as it does the problem of sin, is wholly explicable in terms of human freedom. The freedom is there; this is never to be denied. There is sin which men knowingly and deliberately commit, and there is evil which they knowingly and deliberately cause. But this is anything but the whole story. We have still to face the fact that there is evil which is structural in individual human nature, structural in human society, structural in the very nature of created existence, and this structural evil, the evil principle itself, is accountable not only for the various specific *evils* that attend the course of existence; it is accountable also for sin, since there would not be sin save for the prior and broader area of evil.

To what other conclusion can we come than that for some profound reason there *could not* be any kind of animate existence into which the evil principle did not to some degree enter; and that there *could not* be, as the apex of animate existence, a rational and ethical intelligence into which the evil principle did not necessarily enter so as not only to corrupt it intrinsically but also to assure that the corruption would come to expression in appropriate ways? The system of nature which is claimed to rest on creative

will bespeaks that will as either inconsistent, something less than perfectly good, something less than perfectly wise, *or* as a will which continually meets opposition whose presence and action are both an irritant to the creative will, an obstacle for the creative will to subdue to its own purposes, and always a factor modifying the creative will's possibilities. The man who is integrated with the system of nature, and who is also endowed with qualities which set him off from the rest of nature, is therefore doomed to conflict, and he is doomed to failure. He is born neither free nor good. By the time he is aware of himself he is in chains. He is the complex fruitage of his complex ancestry. He "finds a law in his members." The commandment says one thing and the "flesh" says another.

Contradiction inheres in the structural framework of existence; it inheres in all organic life; it inheres in the nature of man. *Creation is creativity in strife with discreativity.* This is as nearly a correct account of what we everywhere observe and experience as can be condensed into seven words! Thus considered, creation is not explicable on the basis of a God who is a remote, detached, unconcerned Aristotelian spectator. It is not explicable on the basis of a God who is an exalted Augustinian despot, claiming to "damn" souls arbitrarily to disclose his righteousness. It is not explicable on the basis of a God whose equal presence and equal action in everything everywhere, from center to circumference, makes him the Spinozistic All. It is not explicable on the basis of a God who is a cold mechanical unfeeling Hegelian Dialectician, an incarnate syllogism, a system of impeccable logic dramatizing its own impeccability, so that nothing is ever out of place, nothing is ever wrong save for the time it requires to prove that it was right! It is not explicable on the basis of any kind of unqualified Monism, or any kind of transcendental Absolutism, or any kind of materialistic or spiritualistic Pantheism, or any kind of subjective Idealism.

Creation is not explicable on any these bases, for the simple reason that they either take out of evil its essential quality as evil, or they so root and ground evil in God as to require us to believe that evil is not evil or that God is not good. To deny that evil is evil is to deny the common-sense judgment of mankind, except the few who seem able to juggle it away by a fantistic dialectic; and to deny that God is good is to crown evil Lord of all, Lord even of the good that still manages somehow to creep into existence.

Creation is explicable only on the basis of God's own self-revelation. He has revealed himself as a God of creative power and and holy love who seeks the increase of good, but who is hindered in his creative endeavor by an alien power which lays a burden of suffering both upon the Creator himself and upon that which he creates. That Kingdom of God which is the goal of the creative endeavor can come only by great tribulation. The tribulation is due not merely to the fact that man's free will stands opposed to the will of God, although that opposition can often be real enough. It is due to the fact that there is something more to overcome than the will of man—a dark, insensate, irrational power, the enemy of the good, the Adversary. The understanding of creation is not possible apart from the recognition of this power, nor yet is the revelation itself, for the revelation in its final form involved the Cross, and the Cross is the point where the Creator and the Adversary came to the death grapple. The very process of the revelation is an evidence of the activity of the Adversary, as it is also the chosen means whereby the Creator, entering more and more completely into the conflict, makes it evident that his creative activity is fulfilling itself in his redemptive activity. The Creator is also the Redeemer, and he would redeem his creation not simply from sin but from evil.

All creativity is divine because it seeks increase of good. All discreativity is demonic because it seeks increase of evil. For the purposes of Christian interpretation, therefore, the concept of the demonic is as indispensable as the concept of the divine. Any attempt to trace the demonic, as an existentive reality, to the will of God, is nothing but a tour de force. As we shall see, the creative will of God provides the demonic with a field of activity, but that is another matter. In themselves considered, the divine and the demonic are absolute opposites. The form taken by the creative movement is the issue of their impact. The creative movement is destined to become also a redemptive movement. The movement becomes redemptive according as the demonic comes increasingly under the control of the divine. This is the "eternal life" of the Fourth Gospel—*good untouched and untouchable by evil.* The Christian faith, therefore, inevitably includes an eschatology: "history" moves to a "beyond history." "History" bespeaks the joint action of the divine and the demonic; it is therefore compacted

of good and evil. "Beyond history" bespeaks the action of the divine alone; evil has no place in it; it is the wholly good.

The creative and redemptive activities of God are in keeping with his character as holy love. That is to say, they are not the activities of mere arbitrary will. P. T. Forsyth was accustomed to say that theology had greatly suffered from the tendency of Christian thinkers to de-moralize the divine attributes. God can never act out of character. If we remember that, we shall not have to fall back upon the device, adopted by both Augustine and Calvin, of "secret counsels" for justifying God when some especially dreadful situation was being traced directly to his will.

At a time when the church was being encouraged to believe that an atonement through the death of Christ was a merely arbitrary decision on the part of God, Irenaeus introduced the idea of divine *persuasion.* In his treatise *Against Heresies,* Irenaeus writes:

> Since the Adversary tyrannized over us unjustly, and, though we were by nature the property of the omnipotent God, alienated us contrary to nature, rendering us his own disciples, the Word of God, powerful in all things, and not defective with regard to his own justice, did righteously turn against that Adversary, and redeem from him his own property, *not by violent means,* as the Adversary had obtained dominion over us at the beginning, when he insatiably snatched away what was not his own, but *by means of persuasion,* as became a God of counsel, who does not use violent means to obtain what he desires; so that neither should justice be infringed upon, nor the ancient handiwork of God go to destruction." (Bk. V, chap. 1, sec. 1.)

Irenaeus meant that the ways of God are moral ways, not the ways of despotism. What may seem like despotic features of the course of existence are given that appearance by the interference of the Adversary. Evil may be met and overcome only by ways that are congruous with that holy love which is the Creator's essential nature.

God, indeed, may use evil to destroy evil, and he may use evil to increase good, but he can never regard evil as anything else than a foe, and he must deal with the foe in ways which the nature of the foe makes possible to a nature such as his own. His involvement in strife is therefore inevitable. As we shall see, the conflict is ultimately one of his own choosing, since to him belongs the creative initiative; but having chosen as he did, he gives his all to the con-

flict because nothing less than his all will suffice. The total resources of God go into the creative and redemptive travail. With nothing less may he meet evil as a persistent, immanent, and unpredictable principle of destruction, whether it manifest itself in the framework of existence, or in the order of nature, or in the realm of organisms, or in the hearts and the wills of men, or in the intricacies of their social relationships. His activities, especially in the sphere of the human, are sometimes punitive, sometimes admonitory, sometimes remedial, but always illuminative and redemptive for those who will see them so, because always directed to the conquest of evil and to the increase of the domain of holy love. But his means are always the means of one who is in himself holy love, and it is to the increase of love that they are directed even when they seem least lovelike because most entangled with what is hostile to love. Always he seeks to make even the wrath of the Adversary to praise him.

This recognition of creative conflict and redemptive conflict is nothing new. Instead, it is the one thing which men seem never to have been able to escape. Dualistic philosophies there have been in plenty, and even those who cannot accept them usually make no effort to deny the facts which they attempt to account for. They simply attempt to account for them in some other way. One of the earliest of Greek philosophers was Empedocles. Greek thought before him had emphasized one or the other of two extremes. There was the extreme that saw in existence nothing but a process of incessant change, a perpetual coming and going, but nowhere any stabilities, nowhere any permanencies, nowhere any fixed points which remained the same. The other extreme was that change was purely illusory. Reality attaches only to that which never began, never ends, and remains always the same, yesterday, today, and forever. Empedocles undertook to reconcile these two extremes by incorporating them in a view which required both. He assumed the existence of certain "elements" which were different in their nature. These elements were in themselves unchangeable. They were uncreated and therefore indestructible. They entered, however, into various combinations, and the world as we know it, and all its manifold forms, is the total of these combinations at the given time. The combinations, however, come about not by chance, but by the action of two "forces"

of exactly opposite character. Empedocles called one Hate; the other he called Love. The two are in constant strife, and the field for their strife is provided by the "elements." According as Hate prevails, there is disunity and destruction. According as Love prevails, there is unity and permanence.

The conception represents a pure philosophical "guess" on the part of Empedocles, but it was certainly nearer to a reasonable interpretation of the form under which existence presents itself to us than anything offered by his predecessors, or, for that matter, than anything offered by most of his successors.

Christian thought has, in general, been less realistic than the pagan Empedocles. It has taken creative power to mean unlimited power; divine sovereignty to mean absolutism; providential control to mean effortless will. It has assumed that nothing can exist without the divine consent. Indeed, in modern times it has often been taken for granted that the philosophy which provides the best framework for Christianity is some form of idealistic monism. Nobody will deny that such a framework has frequently been utilized for this purpose, with a result nothing less than intellectually impressive. But in these attempts something is always left out, and it must be left out.

The attempt to reduce the Adversary to a form, necessary or voluntary, of the activity of the Creator, does not make sense of human observation and experience, and to make sense of human observation and experience is the one justification of metaphysical speculation. Worse still, so far as the Christian faith is concerned, it does not make sense of the revelation, either of what it *is*, or of the processes by which it was given, or of the purpose which it is intended to serve, or of the results which it actually and demonstrably brings about. If what is mean by the Christian faith, resting as it does upon what is accepted as a self-disclosure of God the Creator, requires, to make it intelligible, a metaphysical theory which is neither purely monistic nor purely idealistic, it is difficult to see from what source an injunction may be issued forbidding the construction of such a metaphysical theory, and it is difficult to see why the injunction, if issued, should be heeded.

The supposition that the Christian faith respecting God and man and Christ and the world is, in itself, nothing but a vast irrationality, is the purest misapprehension, whether the supposition be

made by enemies or by friends. This faith, when it is properly understood, does more to put a *meaning* into the creative process, and not only *a* meaning, but a meaning profound, impressive, satisfying, challenging, creative, than is put into it from any other point of view ever occupied by men. A faith that accomplishes that is already invested with the right to create a metaphysic agreeable to its own nature, its own pronouncements, its own demands, and its own creative achievements.

When the starting point for reflection is not the assumption of "the necessary and absolute oneness of pure being," as is customary in monistic systems, but the faith-revelation and what it can be shown to mean, to promise, and to accomplish, then the curious fear that reflection might end, not with the conception of original uncreated being as "simple" but with the conception of it as "complex," very largely vanishes. William James once confessed that he owed it to Bergson that he had acquired the courage to break away from absolutisms of the Hegelian type, and to refuse any longer to attempt to force life and experience into a logical straight jacket whose rigidity not only derived from a vast unverifiable premise, but threatened to strangle life itself. Any other man who will patiently use his eyes, patiently listen to the voice of experience, and having done that will patiently ponder the scripture witness to God, allowing that witness with all its ramifications to bring its impact to bear upon his mind—any such man will find himself undergoing an emancipation similar to that which came to William James.

At the conclusion of the *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion,* David Hume puts into the mouth of the character Philo, who is usually regarded as representing Hume himself, the words; "To be a philosophical Sceptic is, in a man of letters, the first and most essential step toward being a sound believing Christian." What is meant is that one is not to approach the Christian faith with one's mind loaded down with philosophical presuppositions. Christianity must be allowed to speak for itself. One is tempted to accommodate the famous words of Philo, and say: "In order to be a sound believing Christian, a man must be willing to incur the stigma of having abandoned traditional monism." To the uninitiated this may sound very dreadful, but it is really not so dreadful after all; and the man who decides to be first of all "a sound believing

Christian" and then follow the argument whithersoever it may lead, will probably be able to endure the stigma very nicely!

The conception of the demonic, therefore, as a metaphysical reality which stands in necessary and eternal "otherness"—*totaliter aliter*—over against the metaphysical reality of the divine, is not to be rejected simply because it divides the metaphysical realm. This should be the more apparent when the implications of the conception are worked out. For example, the demonic is to be regarded as the discreative, and the divine as the creative. Discreativity is operative only where creativity is already operative. There can be destruction only where there is something to destroy. The demonic is therefore pure passivity unless and until the divine becomes creatively active. The motivation of the divine creativity is a problem by itself, and will be considered more fully later. It suffices to say at present that the demonic, being essentially destructive, cannot create the conditions of its own activity. Only the divine can do that, and in that fact lies what can be nothing else than the tragic dilemma of the divine. *God cannot act creatively without making it possible for the demonic to act discreatively.* Complete divine quiescence means that there is no evil save as dark metaphysical passivity.

The basic evil, then, is in the fact that if there is to be created good, there will also be discreative evil as the enemy of the good, and if evil is even then to serve the cause of good, it will be only as creativity is willing to pay the price of subjecting it. Christianity very simply affirms that creativity pays this price precisely in the means it adopts to become redemptive as well. God the Creator in due time reveals himself as God the Redeemer. God creates for the sake of the good, and for that alone, but the good that he seeks through creation gives rise to forms of evil that he does not seek, that he cannot tolerate, and that he must therefore set himself to destroy. God is free in his purpose to create, but he is not wholly free in respect of the *conditions* of creation. As his will becomes creative there is also creation, but creation is more than the direct expression of his will. It carries a *plus*, and that plus is of evil: it is, indeed, what evil is.

What therefore should be creative joy is tempered to creative agony. Creation is a song which is also a cry. Without the shedding of blood there is not anything. That is not simply a law of God's

ordaining: that is a law of God's own life! The fitting symbol of creativity in conflict with discreativity, of the divine in conflict with the demonic, more concretely of the Creator in conflict with the Adversary, is a Cross and a Crown of Thorns, and not otherwise can there be that Resurrection which is the Creator's final triumph. *Life beyond the reach of destruction*—this is the goal of the creative and redemptive travail. It is the very fact that God's creative purpose and activity meets frustration that invests the purpose and the activity with sacrifice. The audacious metaphor in the Revelation of John of a slain Lamb sharing the very throne of God, says it all. The Cross that appears at a specific point in time bespeaks the Cross that underlies all time because it is itself timeless.

Chapter X. IN THE BEGINNING—AND SINCE

THE GROUND OF EVIL, SO IT HAS BEEN SUGGESTED ABOVE, IS OUTSIDE both the nature of God and the will of God, and is found in the Adversary, or in the demonic standing over against God in an absolute "otherness." An attempt is now to be made to find a basis for this conception. The attempt is offered as no more than "a speculative venture," and is to be considered as such.

"In the beginning—God." The ancient declaration is here taken for granted. But it is not being taken for granted that in the beginning was God and nothing else. In the beginning was the Adversary as well, and not only the Adversary but also a form of existence—later to be called "the residue" or "the residual constant"—which made it possible for the two to meet in conflict. Each of the three is itself and no other. Neither is to be explained by the other two. It is the very nature of eternal existence to be this way. God never began to be. The Adversary never began to be. The "makings" of their battlefield never began to be. The only thing that began to be was the conflict itself, at least, the conflict in the form which makes creation as we know it. Creation is the issue of God's challenge to the Adversary and of the Adversary's acceptance of the challenge.

In the important contemporary movement known as Neo-Thomism, God is conceived as Pure Being. The fact is due to the adoption by Thomas Aquinas, in the thirteenth century, of the metaphysics of Aristotle as a framework for Christian theology. To this conception of Pure Being Thomism attempts to attach all that has been disclosed respecting God in the Christian revelation.

Whether this can be done without surrendering the conception itself is a question. The one thing Aristotle would have denied is that God is a personal being in the Hebrew-Christian sense. The activities and relations which the Hebrew-Christian faith attributes to God make out of him something very different from Pure Being. They require him to be "a" being of a very definite "kind," even

if the only one of that "kind." He is not a God of undisturbed philosophic calm, but a God who is involved in the creative and redemptive travail. The context of the "I Am That I Am" (Exod. 3:14) makes it quite plain that the God thus named was very much more than such an abstraction as Pure Being. The name indicated a God who was deeply and sacrificially *interested in a cause*, and consequently a God who was aware of opposition and preparing to meet it.

There are those who say that "existence" is a mere idea which arises in the mind because we think or experience definite "existents." There are others who say that there can be existents only as there is already existence. What one says about this will depend very much on his mental temper. The present discussion assumes that the logic of the case is with the second position.

The ensuing problem is apparent. The problem is how the primal existence can also be the three primal existents of God, the Adversary, and the residue. The reasonable conclusion would seem to be that these three existents are as they are because uncreated existence—the so-called pure existence—is under a necessary law of self-differentiation. It is the *nature* of existence to function as these three primal forms. It is that way because it is that way. The order is not that of chronological sequence but that of intrinsic relation. What must be a first for our thinking is not a first in time. There is here no chronological first and second. What is eternal and necessary is not sequential. The necessary undifferentiated prime is coeternal with its own necessary primal self-differentiation. It is easy enough to call this so much verbalism, but a similar charge may be laid against *any* speculative effort which seeks to relate necessary structure to necessary process and to treat each as equally real. We seem to be faced with both necessities. If the structural law of primal existence, namely, self-differentiation, also assures process within existence, as seems to be the case, so that within the same unitary whole there is both the unchanging and the changing, our difficulty in understanding how this can be so will bespeak rather limitations on our thinking than intrinsic incredibility. We are justified in speculating as to the *modus operandi* involved, but we shall hardly feel called upon to dogmatize.

The present speculation supposes uncreated and undifferentiated

existence which under its own necessary law of self-differentiation falls into the three distinct forms of the divine, the demonic, and the residue. There is no earlier and later here: we are confronted with eternal existence in its necessary complexity. We may consider such existence under two aspects, its aspect as undifferentiated, and its aspect as self-differentiated, but while the two aspects are separable in thought they are not separable in fact. Both "always" were—which may mean that our thinking about the ultimate must be content to rest in a paradox.

The three prime existents accounted for in the way suggested are therefore not so many creations; instead, they are necessities of existence. The divine is eternal. The demonic is eternal. The residue—meaning primal existence which does not enter into either the divine or the demonic—is eternal. But each is limited by the other two; consequently existence is always more than any one of them. There is one eternal existence, but it exists as three eternal existents. If one may say it quite concisely, there are three eternals, the divine, the demonic, and the residue, the residue being a constant.

Each of the three eternals has its own distinctive nature, and therefore its own distinctive function. The divine is creative by its very nature; the demonic is discreative by its very nature; the residual constant is uncreative by its very nature. The creative divine creates through the instrumentality of the uncreative constant, whose function it is to be the bearer of quality, of meaning, of value, of life; and the discreative demonic destroys or seeks to destroy what is created, since destructiveness is its very nature. The divine and the demonic are absolute opposites. Neither can destroy the other because each is a necessary existent. Either can affect the other only through the residual uncreative constant. Since the divine is under a necessary law of creativity, and since creativity becomes operative through the uncreative constant, it follows both that there will be creativity, and that creativity will be a process of grim conflict, since the demonic is as much under a necessary law of discreativity or destructiveness as the divine is under a necessary law of creativity. No created being, no created *kind*, can be accounted for wholly by the divine, or wholly by the demonic, or wholly by the residual constant, but only by all three. The given thing is what it is because they are what they are.

The course of created existence in its character of tragic drama, marked by conflicts, contradictions, sufferings, irrationalities, disintegrations, hereby becomes understandable. But understandable also is the fact that through all these tensions and contradictions, both in spite of them and because of them, appear joy and triumphs, meanings and values, as so many signs of a persistent purpose of good, and as the increasing evidence that *this purpose yields the clue to the drama.*

With this much said, the three existents may now perhaps be characterized a little more sharply.

1. *The residue.* This has already been called "the residual constant." It provides the "substance" of whatever is created but it never increases or diminishes in its total quantity. There is as much now as there ever was, and there will never be any less or more than there is now. It is residual because it is that form of the primal self-differentiation which enters into neither the divine nor the demonic. It is a constant just because it is eternal and uncreated. Any given form of existence which arises and then passes away is not merely a collection of qualities and disqualities. The qualities and disqualities inhere in a common base, which in itself has neither quality nor disquality. When the disqualities overcome the qualities, and destruction follows (destruction being disintegration), that which provided the base is still as much in existence as it ever was. Its function resembles that of the "potentiality" of Aristotle or that of the "non-being" or the "receptable" of Plato. It creates nothing, but it provides a condition without which creation would be impossible. This uncreative residual constant cannot be described except in terms of its function, because in its pure form it lies beyond experience. It can be experienced only as it carries a "plus," and its function is precisely to make this "plus" possible. If the "plus" disappears, the residue drops out of experience, but it does not drop out of existence. It remains as *the permanent possibility of empiric actualities;* it is in this sense that it is a constant. Through it alone can Form, whose sole source is the divine, be particularized into forms. Through it alone can Value (Beauty, Truth, Goodness) be particularized into values (things, events, or situations characterized as beautiful, true, or good). Through it alone can Life, whose sole source is the divine, be particularized into lives. The uncreated residual constant is an indispensable condition to

creativity as, in its turn, creativity is to discreativity. Certainly modern science seems to suppose so.

2. *The creative divine.* In attempting to characterize the creative divine, we have the advantage of an analogy with ourselves, the more so when one of our premises is the Hebrew-Christian belief in the *imago Dei.* To speak of the creative divine as God, living, personal, rational, and good, seems, from this point of view, to be simply inevitable. These qualities are found in the human creature as involved in the creative process. To derive them from the creative source, and to believe that they bear some resemblance to intrinsic qualities of the source, is a reasonable enough supposition, and there has always been a type of "natural theology" that felt the force of this and made use of it.

The Christian faith confronts us with such a God as an actuality, but it requires that we go much farther than this. For this faith asserts that the nature of God is not simple but complex, and that this complexity is the ground of his creative and redeeming activities. It is the fact of this complexity that prevents God from being an impersonal Solitary, and makes him instead a socially complete Person. The conception is obviously germane to the present discussion, and it provides the philosophical basis for belief in the *freedom* of divine creativity which will be considered in a later chapter.

This conception of divine complexity is made intelligible by supposing the operation within the very being of God of precisely that same law of necessary self-differentiation by which the one primal existence is also the three primal existents. It is by virtue of this law that God is, in the language of Christian tradition, aTrinity. The intrinsic diversity of his eternal and necessary nature makes him at once Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—one God.

Here again there is not a chronological sequence. Just as we are not required to say that "there was a time" when there was no definite divine existent but only the undifferentiated prime, so we are not required to say that "there was a time" when there was no Trinity but only an undifferentiated divine existent. What is an order for our thought is not an order involving a before and after in actuality; rather, it is an order of necessary relationships. In our thinking we pass from primal existence as undifferentiated to primal existence as necessarily self-differentiated. From the divine

existent, as one of the three forms arising from the self-differentiation, we pass to the three forms arising from a like necessary self-differentiation on the part of the divine existent. Yet this order of thought and order of relationships notwithstanding, we must still assert the "coeternity" of (1) the prime uncreated and undifferentiated existence, (2) the three prime and uncreated existents—the divine, the demonic, and the residue—arising from the necessary self-differentiation of the prime existence, and (3) the three prime and uncreated existents—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit —arising from the necessary self-differentiation of the divine existent.

This conception of the Trinity as an eternal order within the eternal Godhead, representing not the divine will but the divine nature, or "the way God necessarily is," is the one that has generally prevailed in Christian tradition. The fact of an order is implied in the very terms, the First Person, the Second Person, and the Third Person of the Trinity, yet it has never been taken to mean that either existed before or after the others. The value and significance of this conception of God as an eternal One who is also an eternal Three will appear below. It at least means that God, to repeat the phrase already used, has all the qualities of a completely socialized Person, and it is a serious question whether such qualities could be assigned to him under any other conception.

3. *The discreative demonic.* Of the discreative demonic we can only say that it is everything the creative divine is not. It is the purely irrational, the purely immoral, the purely malign, the purely destructive. Its nature is such that it can tolerate nothing but itself. To speak of it simply as a *principle* does not go far enough. Not without significance is the fact of an almost universal tendency among men to talk about evil in concrete and dramatic and even semipersonal terms.

There are, however, absent from the concept of the demonic precisely those rational and moral qualities which connote the personal. The demonic, like the divine, is *sui generis*, but in the one case we have an *imago* to go by that we do not have in the other, except as one may be *produced*. We have suggested that we know the nature of the demonic only by its effects upon the created. There is one point where those effects are most apparent: they are most apparent at the point where the image of God is

already manifest, that is, in man. *The discreative power of the demonic can be most destructive at precisely that level where the creative power of the divine can be most productive.* What can become most like God can become most unlike him. That into which God, through long and patient processes, at last put most of himself is that from which he can be entirely banished. The freedom which is essential to the realization of the creative purpose in man may instead completely frustrate it.

If in the supreme achievement of creativity, namely, a perfectly good man, we get our best clue to the divine, then in *a completely bad man* we may get our best clue to the demonic. Whether there can be actually a completely bad man is a question. But we can at least imagine what one would be. He would be a man in whom every personal quality had gone into reverse. But would he still be a *man?* Would he not rather be a mere decentralized disorganized creature, a creature whose law was lawlessness, manhood degenerated to the nadir of permanent animate thinghood—what Mephistopheles would be if what he would do to others should happen to himself? *A completely bad man would be discreative corruptibility become absolute.* One can but hope and pray that this will never be, but what it visualizes is at least an approximation to the demonic. What a personal existent, bearing the *imago Dei*, would be if it were to become demoralized, derationalized, depersonalized, desocialized, in a word, utterly dehumanized—in this the demonic has perchance an analogy.

Whether the demonic thus conceived is to be described by the pronoun "he" or by the pronoun "it" may be left open. "He" clearly says too much; "it" seems to say too little. If, however, our feeling that there is something of malign intention about the course of evil in the world is valid, it were better to say "he" and protect the element of malignity than to say "it" and fail of the suggestion.

In any event, the pronoun "he" has the merit of preserving the dramatic quality of the creative strife and preventing the all too common reduction of it to the blind action of impersonal law. The course of created existence is not a mock conflict between mock foes on a mock stage. It is a real conflict between real foes on a real stage for real stakes. To say that each *hates* the other because the other is who and what he is may imply a touch of

"anthropomorphism," but we would better be anthropomorphic and remain aware and help others become aware of the deadly grimness of the strife than to fall back upon impersonal and therefore insipid terms for the sake of being genteel! "The devil" and "hell" may be just as appropriate descriptions of one aspect of existence as "God" and "heaven" may be of another. If the Creator is "Some One" to worship, love, and serve for what he is and for what he does, then his Adversary is, if not "someone" at least *somewhat* to hate for what "he" is and for what "he" does, and to be opposed in every possible way to the end of achieving "his" complete frustration. Replacing "he" with "it," and "his" with "its," will still not do away with the necessity of this opposition!

Not for nothing did Peter write in an evil time to hard-pressed souls: "Be sober, be watchful: your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour; being steadfast in your faith, withstand him, for your brethren who are in the world are enduring sufferings similar to yours." (I Pet. 5:8-9.)

Chapter XI. THE CHALLENGE TO MORTAL COMBAT

THE SPECULATIVE VENTURE JUST OFFERED AT LEAST SERVES TO accentuate the reality of the creative and redemptive conflict as we meet it in actual experience, and to do so agreeably to the nature and purposes of the divine self-disclosure.

The self-disclosed God is disclosed as a God of holy love. This carries with it the fact of his absolute righteousness, but when we consider the conditions in which holy love is active, we can hardly affirm an absolute sovereignty. There is a Christian doctrine of divine sovereignty, and in due time we shall consider it, but if we use the word "absolute" it must be with distinct modifications. John Scott Lidgett was wont to say that the divine sovereignty was a Sovereign Fatherhood. To conceive God's sovereignty after the analogy of fatherhood is certainly more in keeping with the New Testament and with the tenor of Christian experience than the conception of it in terms of oriental monarchism.

God's will is not the less righteous, and it is not less a will of holy love, because it must operate in conditions not wholly of its own choosing. God must work in that situation which is made possible by the very nature of existence as a whole. If in that existence there lurks a profound milignancy, that is a fact of which God the Creator must take account, and act accordingly. To say this is in no sense to say something that is derogatory of God. The denial of it may turn out to be much more derogatory, considering the character of the world over which he is then presumably sole ruler. It were better to do what a few men have always felt compelled to do, namely, divide the realm of existence, and by that much limit the divine sovereignty, than to keep the realm single and then be compelled to put a question mark after the character of the sovereign.

This will not take the will of God out of a vital relation to human life and experience. Anything but that. We shall continue

to accept as the profoundest of truths that God has a will for every man in every situation, and that he has a will respecting the situation; no one who is determind by the revelation can ever doubt that. But it will not follow that we shall accept *the situation considered in itself* as equally his will. There are some human situations of which we can only say that God would fain see them smashed. Not the situation is of his will—slums, sweatshops, malignant diseases, insanitary dwellings, brothels, gin palaces, gambling hells, helpless human beings under ruthless exploitation; the Augustinians notwithstanding, God does not will that these things shall be as the proper issue of a single primal act of disobedience. Instead, he wills their destruction: they are of the demonic, not of the divine. No view of "providence" is profoundly Christian which sees famine as a direct expression of the will of God. It is true that but for God's creative will there would be no famine because no crops to fail and no men, women, and children to go hungry, but that is a different matter. The will of God in respect of famine is that the hungry shall still be fed, and that means shall be devised whereby famine, like wars, shall be made to cease to the ends of the earth.

Any hospital serves to dramatize the dilemma of the creative God. There is plenty in that hospital which God hates as much as does any nurse, physician, surgeon, or heartbroken spectator; but over against that is the fight against the hateful, and that fight is God's, and it is only because it is God's fight that it can be man's fight as well. The surgeon who makes an incision in quivering human flesh to remove a malignant growth, lessen suffering, and perchance save a life, is not seeking to frustrate the will of God, as men at one time actually thought and said! He could well bow his head a moment before making the incision, and whisper, as a certain successful surgeon invariably did, "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven!" And if the evil thing proved too much for the surgeon's skill, and God's will was at that point frustrated, there was still a will of God for the sufferer, still a will of God for the stricken friends, still a will of God that the fight against evil shall be continued. A speaker who called upon the American people to cease believing in God because seventeen million persons now living would die of cancer would have made a much better and a much wiser use of his time had he called upon the American

people to join with God in the fight against cancer by the use of the very means which God is seeking to put into their hands for this purpose, *because the only way in which God can use the means is through human minds and human hands.* "We are laborers together with God."

Similarly with sin. Sin is not of the will of God, even though but for the creative will of God there would not be that world in which sin occurs. God makes it possible for men to be sinners, but it is not on that account that he created them. Rather he created them to be saints, even though he had to endure their sinfulness as a condition to their saintship. A saint is a redeemed sinner, and from the standpoint of the creative necessity, and the conditions in which it must be exercised, the process is all one. Redemption is creativity at its highest level, and it can reach that level only by way of the lower levels. "First the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear."

For just as God has a will in respect of all other evils, so also he has a will in respect of sin. That will is apparent in the consequences he attaches to it, and in the way in which he enlists all the resources of his holy love against it. In *Pippa Passes*, Ottima, the wife of Luca, and Sebald her paramour were alone in the shrub-house until the break of dawn. Was that of the will of God? When, in his paroxysm, Sebald took the long hair of Ottima and wound it thrice around her brow and cried,

> I crown you
> My great white queen, my spirit's arbitress,
> Magnificent [*in sin!*]

was the will of God in the defiant gesture, in the audacious flouting of life's fundamental decencies? Let those who could still say that it was be charged with being more concerned with the fancied requirements of their logic than with the moral character of God! But as Sebald came to his climax, little Pippa passed by the shrub-house, singing for joy that she, a factory girl, had a whole day to herself, a single day in which to store up the happiness whose memory must be her stay for a year. How she had hailed the first glimmer of light through her bedroom window:

Thou art my single day, God sends to leaven
What were all earth else, with a feel of heaven—
Sole light that helps me through the year, thy sun's!

There are in her town of Asolo four persons reputed to be the happiest. She will hunt them out; she will "pass by" where they tarry; she will imagine herself first one and then the other of them, not for envy, no, but just so that she too, on her one day, may know happiness.

To-morrow I must be Pippa who winds silk,
The whole year round, to earn just bread and milk:
But, this one day, I have leave to go,
And play out my fancy's fullest games;
I may fancy all day—and it shall be so—
That I taste of the pleasures, am called by the names
Of the Happiest Four in our Asolo!

One of the "happiest four" is Ottima, "great haughty Ottima," enamored of Sebald as all the world knows except old Luca himself, and to be found at any dawn with Sebald in Luca's shrub-house. And there are three other happy ones besides.

I will pass each, and see their happiness,
And envy none—being just as great, no doubt,
Useful to men, and dear to God, as they!

First to the shrub-house, casually to pass it, perchance to be granted a glimpse of Sebald's homage. That homage had just reached its blasphemous summit—"I crown you . . . queen, . . . arbitress, magnificent" *in sin!*—when Pippa sang her little song. Was God in that shrub-house? Did God inspire that mad utterance? Was he not rather in Pippa's passing? Was he not rather in her artless song?

The year's at the spring;
And day's at the morn;
Morning's at seven;
The hill-side's dew-pearled;
The lark's on the wing;
The snail's on the thorn:
God's in his heaven—
All's right with the world!

And down into the soul of Sebald the words crashed like the trumpet of doom. There are few if any scenes in Browning more

morally ruthless, more authentically descriptive of judgment on sin, than what happened in that shrub-house in the next few minutes. "God's in his heaven!" The words were a lash whipping Sebald into a frenzy of guilty terror. He screams at Ottima: "Get your clothes on! . . . wipe off that paint! I hate you!" Her "strange grace" is "grace" no longer. He sees only a "listless cheek," a "cloven brow," a "puckered chin." Even the glorious hair is but "a dead web." He goes on:

> That little peasant's voice
> Has righted all again. Though I be lost,
> I know which is the better, never fear,
> Of vice or virtue, purity or lust,
> Nature or trick! I see what I have done,
> Entirely now! Oh I am proud to feel
> Such torments—let the world take credit thence—
> I, having done my deed, pay too its price!
> I hate, hate—curse you! *God's in his heaven!*

Who was triumphant in the shrub-house until Pippa passed by? The Adversary, no less. Who was triumphant a moment later? God, no less. Who was still triumphant in the death pact of the guilty pair? Still God. For when, with her expiring breath, stripped of all her pride and arrogance and defiance, Ottima cried: "Not me—to him, O God, be merciful!" there had as surely begun a remaking of her soul as of the soul of Sebald. God, whose will was defied in the sin, sees in the long-delayed but at last arrived *conviction* of sin, the beginning of his will's fruition. "I saw," wrote John Bunyan, "a path to heaven from the very gates of hell."

It is not to be denied that by his very act of creation, God gives the Adversary his opportunity, and that evil and sin become an inevitable concomitant of the creative act. It is not to be denied that God permits evil to run its course, since he can halt it only by halting everything else, and that is to admit final defeat. It is not to be denied that God makes use of evil in many a subtle way to further his own purpose of good, not doing evil that good might come, but enduring evil that good might come. It is not to be denied that evil may contribute to his glory in the very victory he accomplishes through it and gains over it. All is not merrily right with the world simply because God's in his heaven. Much is wrong with the world, God in heaven notwithstanding. But it is still true

that because God *is* in his heaven—better still, because God does not *stay* in his heaven, as one "sitting apart, contemplating all," but enters the arena of conflict as a personal participant, most present, like a faithful leader, where the strife is fiercest—because this is so, it is the assurance that *not all is wrong with the world* and that it may more and more become right.

It will anticipate what must be more fully dwelt upon at a later place, but it will emphasize what has just been said about God's "personal participation," if we briefly consider here the significance of the Incarnation, the climactic point in the self-disclosure of God. For by the Incarnation, God the Father in the person of God the Son through the instrumentality of God the Holy Spirit, receives to himself the worst that evil can do, because only so can he inflict upon evil his most deadly blow.

For consider the concomitants of the Incarnation. The Incarnation was, for the Son of God, a perpetual humiliation. "He humbled himself." It was "for the joy that was set before him" that he "endured the cross, despising the shame," that shame including "the contradiction of sinners against himself." The mystery of his birth, the processes of his earthly discipline, "in all points" like unto his brethren's, the perplexities, the uncertainties, the temptations, the sufferings, the misunderstandings, the persecutions, the disloyalties, the betrayals, the rejections, the agonies, the cross, the descent into the dark underworld, the resurrection—all of these are so many episodes of the incarnate experience.

But they are more than that. They are, besides, the evidence of how real and how dire even for God the Creator is the conflict which is inseparable from created existence. The Incarnation thus conceived means that more is involved in the conflict than simply the well-being of God's creation, in particular of his creature man: it means that there is involved also the moral integrity of God, which is to say, the actuality of his holiness and of his love. He *must* fight his enemy, and he must fight him wherever he finds him.

Where does he most find him? He finds him most in human life. This is necessarily so because human life is where God is most creatively active, most concerned with the outcome; and where this is the case, the Adversary is most unmistakably in opposition. The higher God's creativity rises, the more shining and the more

conspicuous becomes the mark at which the Adversary aims. The possible absoluteness of the disvalue is in proportion to the possible splendor of the value.

It is in the human, therefore, where the most is at stake, and where the battle goes the hardest, that God himself is most involved and must make his supreme effort. But his supreme effort is also his most costly effort. It is an effort calling for the Creator to clothe himself in that human flesh whose essential mortality makes it certain that the Creative Will will know not only the numerous ills to which flesh is heir, but will know also the impact of shattering death. *God becomes man to save men by his own conquest over the Adversary*. The law of the Kingdom is that he who would save his life must lose it and that he who would be master must be servant, and God fulfills in himself that law. What his nature legislates, his own will performs. He who called men to pass through the eye of the needle justified the call by himself passing through a needle's eye more restrictive than any that man could ever know. He who declared that the Kingdom could be entered only by great tribulation knew a tribulation greater than the mind of man can ever imagine.

The thorn-crowned brow, the riven side, the pierced hands and feet, the parched tongue—what are they? At the very least they are elements in the experience of a strange historical Figure, and the experience is not only undeserved by any single deed or thought —it is voluntarily endured. But is it only that? It is *not* only that if that Strange Figure was what faith has always acclaimed him to be—the Figure resulting from the personal entry of God into the struggle with the Adversary for the possession of the souls of men. In that understanding of it the experience takes on a vast cosmic significance: it attests the Creator in travail of his creation, but not only at this hour. The experience of this hour is symbolic of the experience of the Creator throughout the whole reach of time. Existence engenders its own civil war, and titanic is the strife, with no mercy of foe to foe, and the crown is eternal life or eternal death.

Here is the core and essence of the Christ-revelation. In the Old Testament clouds and darkness are round about it, so that we get only glimpses of it, as when the heartbroken Hosea went to the public market and bought back from her paramours his

faithless and degraded wife Gomer, and took her to his home again, and made himself "despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief," one from whom men turned away their faces, and all this that he might dramatize to a faithless and dissolute Israel the unfailing compassions of a Yahweh who could not abandon his chosen bride, sunken in sin though she was. But in the New Testament this is no longer something vague and shadowy, represented by perplexing allegory. It stands forth there clear, direct, unmistakable, and to the eyes of wondering faith wholly authentic. Immanuel has come in the flesh to ransom captive Israel.

The final strategy of the demonic is to frustrate the divine where the very image of the divine has been stamped. The final strategy of the divine is to meet the demonic precisely where this image has been defaced. The Beast became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld his spawnings, darkly befouling the temples of God which men were meant to be. But the Word too became flesh, and sought to meet with a holier progeny the genderings of the Beast, and to cleanse with the patient hands of love the temples so darkly befouled. And the strategy of the divine seemed not to be equal to the dread encounter. "Come down from the cross!" cried the ribald jesters—and he could not come down. He was fastened too securely: the Adversary had seen to that! The nails held even in that tender flesh!

Or so it seemed to blinded eyes. But it was not the nails that held him there after all. It was nothing that evil could do that held him there. He was held there by something that evil could never understand, and that was destined to render evil ultimately impotent. This is the truth that was faintly glimpsed in the fantastic metaphor of the early church, that God, hunting for the foul dragon that held the souls of men captive, baited a great hook with the flesh of the Son of God, and the dragon greedily gobbled up One whom he recognized as his greatest enemy, and then discovered that he had swallowed the fatal hook, and was ensnared in the very moment of his victory. "Captivity was led captive." The fantastic metaphor has been the butt of many a merry gibe, but the mockers did not understand. They were so busy loudly guffawing at the metaphor that they quite failed to discern the audacious paradox it was intended to illuminate. The hook-and-bait metaphor was a way of

saying that when the Son of God, "the Word became flesh," entered the realm of the Adversary, came under the Adversary's power, and received the blow of the Adversary's last weapon, which is death, and was securely bound in the tomb behind the great stone which effectively barred the door—that when that happened it was not the Son of God who suffered defeat, but the Adversary.

No! It was not nails that held the Incarnate Lord to the cross: it was love. And "love never faileth." Not that at first any saw that it was so. The disciples themselves did not see it so, much less did the Adversary and his minions. A sympathetic bystander could have said that the utter irrationality of evil unleashed itself against the seeming irrationality of holy love, and evil outlasted love because evil can kill and love can only die, and under the lashings of the Adversary, and bereft of all human support, and, as it seemed, even of all divine support, the Strange Figure on the cross bowed his head and *died*. One sympathetic bystander was sorely perplexed. "Truly," was all he could say, "this was a Son of God!" Where is divine creativity more evident than in human life perfected in love? Where was this perfection ever seen as it was seen in this Strange Man? And where is demonic discreativity more evident than when it takes human life perfected in love and shatters it on the insensate stone of death?

But was this the last reading of the Cross? It was not! Was it the Adversary who shook the earth that it trembled, causing the very stone before the door of the tomb to roll back in its socket? Was it the Adversary who sat upon that stone in calm confidence, as well one might who sees death despoiled of its sting and the grave despoiled of its victory? No, it was not the Adversary. The Adversary in this hour was elsewhere! *The hook had held, and the victor was the victim of his own greed!*

In that discovery faith recovered itself and came to its great asseveration: not evil had conquered at the cross, but love; not death held the key to life, but life held the key to death. Descent was ascent. In love's stooping was love's victory. The Adversary provided the means of his own defeat. The ultimate power of frustration meets its own frustration. In the revelation that death, which is the Adversary's last weapon, is not final, is given the revelation that there is in existence a greater power than discreative evil—the power of creative love.

Wherefore it becomes clear to faith for ever that the costly path of human experience here and now is not a blind alley. Life is not without ultimate meaning. The last word is not spoken by the enemy of men's souls. The evil that threatens good may serve the very good it threatens. How luminous it makes the great word of Paul: "I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I that live, but Christ liveth in me: and that life which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the faith which is in the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself up for me." (Gal. 2:20, A.S.V.).

What has now been written will be called so much dramatization. Even so! But when was truth ever rendered falsehood by being dramatized? Who says that a precise, lifeless, bloodless algebraical equation is "truer" than, say, the Garden of Eden narrative, the book of Job, the parable of the prodigal son, the book of the Revelation of John? What is the course of creation itself but, to use the striking phrase of Francis Thompson, the externalized drama of "the steep and trifid God"? To say, "There is good, and there is evil, and the world bespeaks their mutual hostility," is true enough, but it is not the whole truth. Human life and experience is not the interplay of abstractions. It is the clash of realities. The Christian faith not only recognizes that fact, but it has something momentous to say about it. And what is said about it is said, as it must be said, in terms of the realities themselves, not in terms that have no cutting edge, no explosive quality, no martial ring, no high commanding imperative. "Return with thy shield, or on it!" said the Spartan mother to her son. How else in a far deadlier conflict than even a Spartan mother ever visualized?

The Christian faith speaks of existence as a creative and redemptive conflict because that is what existence actually is. It speaks of the possibility of real losses and real losers because that is what the possibility is. It speaks of a Creator whose will underlies the conflict, and of an Adversary who made the conflict inevitable, because there is such a Creator and because there is such an Adversary. And it speaks of Jesus Christ as the form taken by the Creator's challenge to the Adversary to meet in mortal combat, because Jesus Christ was this form.

Prophetic indeed was the outcome of that combat!

Chapter XII. THE CREATOR UNDER NECESSITY

FROM WHAT HAS NOW BEEN SAID, IT WOULD SEEM TO FOLLOW THAT the conflict which is the very essence of created existence originates with God and finds its continuance in the continuation of his initial activity. It was this initial activity which presented the otherwise passive and quiescent demonic with its opportunity of destruction. If the Creator does nothing, the Adversary does nothing. Discreativity is meaningless except as there is creativity.

Why can there be suffering? Because there are sentient creatures. Why can there be diseases? Because there are organisms. Why can there be jealousies, hatreds, oppositions, sorrows, oppressions, sins, and all the torment of conscious guilt and all the canker of unavailing remorse? Because there are minds. It is manifestly true that apart from sentient creatures and organisms and minds, much else of a quite different sort from these varied evils would also not be possible. Then why sentient creatures? Why organisms? Why minds?

We can hardly avoid this issue from any standpoint. Much less can we avoid it when our standpoint is that of the Christian faith and the acceptance of it as God's final word to men about himself. If the world as we know it is the issue of the divine creative impulse, how are we to understand the relation between the divine itself and that issue? On the premises now adopted, there came of the creative travail the conjoined twin which is pain and pleasure, suffering and joy, hatred and love, sin and holiness, defeat and victory, death and life. John Keats has expressed it perfectly in the "Ode on Melancholy":

> And joy, whose hand is ever at his lips
> Bidding adieu; and aching Pleasure nigh,
> Turning to poison while the bee-mouth sips:
> Ay, in the very temple of Delight
> Veiled Melancholy has her sovran shrine,
> Though seen of none save him whose strenuous tongue

Can burst Joy's grape against his palate fine;
His soul shall taste the sadness of her might,
And be among her cloudy trophies hung.

If anyone knew what that meant, it was Keats himself: as sensitive to all lovely things as an Aeolian harp to the faintest breeze, yet himself wasted by disease in his early manhood, haunted daily by the specter of cruel death, doomed to exile from home and friends to gather brief help of a sunnier clime. Who can read unmoved Severn's account of the last days in the little room in Rome, "No. 26 Piazza Di Spagna," where Keats coughed out his life?

Day after day, night after night, here I am by our poor dying friend. My spirits, my intellect, and my health are breaking down. . . . Last night I thought he was going. I could hear the phlegm in his throat; he bade me lift him up on the bed or he would die with pain. I watched him all night, expecting him to be suffocated at every cough.

One reads this, and much else like it; thinks too of the grave of Keats in the Protestant Cemetery in Rome, marked with a very simple stone, and on it the sad epitaph which Keats himself wished: "Here lies one whose name was writ in water."

The creative conflict bespeaks not an unhindered creative will of holy love reveling in sheer creative joy: that lays too heavy a burden on mind and heart and faith alike. Even the joy of the Creator, one surmises, is tempered with "veiled Melancholy," and his pleasure knows an ache. Hence the question that can hardly be avoided: "Is the creative conflict worth its product when the whole product is considered? Is life, in particular the life of man, a justifiable fact?"

The Christian revelation, when taken in its completeness, plainly means that the purpose of God is a purpose of universal good, and that whatever is not good is not of his purpose, even though he may use it, and does use it, to carry his purpose forward. It is through what he does not want but only tolerates that God must get what he does want. The parable of the tares was not spoken for nothing! "Let both grow together until the harvest." Why? Because the attempt to get rid of them *now* would result only in the destruction of the good grain. The ragings of evil are not everything; they are a part, but only a part. He who listens may hear the croak of the black-plumed raven, "grim, ungainly, ghast-

ly, gaunt, and ominous," in it never a note of cheer, but only the same monotonous melancholy;

> Caught from some unhappy master whom unmerciful Disaster
> Followed fast and followed faster till his songs one burden bore—
> Till the dirges of his Hope that melancholy burden bore
> Of "Never—nevermore!"

One may hear that, and only that, and say that it is all that there is to hear. Or one may listen again, and hear more—may even hear, pouring its full heart "in profuse strains of unpremeditated art," the earth-free heaven-bound skylark high over an English upland on a morning in June:

> What thou art we know not;
> What is most like thee?
> From rainbow clouds there flow not
> Drops so bright to see
> As from thy presence showers a rain of melody.

It is not the croak of the raven *or* the song of the skylark; it is both. Both must be heard, because both are here. To have the song of the skylark, is it worth having the croak of the raven as well? God believed it was. Which is an allegory.

In the Epistle to the Hebrews is a line which sums up much of what is set forth in the Bible: "Here we have no continuing city, but we seek one to come." The words occur in connection with an account of the significance of faith. Is the city of God, which is not yet, but which is to be, a faith for God as well as for men? Does even God plan and build in hope, while all around him goes on the wild confusion arising from the attempt to build a quite different city? Is there a real sense in which creation is a divine adventure, not a mere automatic actualizing of a pre-existent blueprint in which every detail is planned, even to the exact moment when it shall be finished?

If the use of the term "adventure" is at all justified, then we must suppose a reason why the adventure is undertaken. Under what great urgency does God go forth conquering and to conquer?

The suggestion is here made that God is under a double motivation. There is the motivation of *creative necessity;* and there is the motivation of *holy love.* The first would mean that he has no

option in respect of creativity; the second would mean that the actual creative goal and purpose represents his choice.

The interplay of this double motivation makes it proper to speak of the divine "adventure." No risks are taken where a blueprint determines everything. "Adventure" in such a circumstance is an unmeaning term. A journey whose every step is known beforehand, in suchwise that there is no difference between the step considered as foreknown and the step as actually taken, is certainly not to be called an "adventure," whatever else it might be. But if there really is adventure, then is there also contingency, and because contingency then a measure of uncertainty besides. A God who goes forward in hope and faith against innumerable and often unpredictable odds—that is a God we harassed and battling pilgrims can understand!

It is very difficult to harmonize the ordinary idea of divine foreknowledge and divine omniscience with the God of the revelation. The one thing we should be determined to preserve is the *reality* of God's concern for men. How can we do that if we conceive God in such a way that he appears as a being to whom concern is impossible? If there is no such thing for God as futurity not yet existent, what can we mean by a God slowly and patiently pursuing a way toward a goal? We are told that what for us is a process stretched out, so to speak, through time, exists for God as a simultaneous whole. There is therefore for God no past and no future, as we understand these terms, but only an ever-present *now*. For God nothing is ever *then* and *there;* instead, everything is *now* and *here*.

This conception has had a large place in both philosophical and theological tradition. The only way in which the absurdity of the conception can be avoided is by supposing that God is a being so utterly different from ourselves that we can only say of him that he is incomprehensible. Certainly his ways are not as our ways, nor his thoughts as our thoughts. But when we say that time means nothing to God, since, being eternal, he "transcends" time, we are equating God with certain metaphysical abstractions, rather than conceiving him as the living personal God of the Scriptures. The possibility of any kind of personal fellowship with a God to whom nothing that happens to us and nothing that is done by us is ever a *novelty*, but was known by him "from eternity," whatever

that may mean, is simply unthinkable. How can God matter to us if we do not matter to him, and how can we *matter* to him if *before* we were here and *while* we are here and *after* we were here mean to him one and the same thing?

This is not to say that we are to think of God as simply one more like unto ourselves. We shall confess in all humility our littleness and his greatness. We shall confess that between the Creator and even the highest of creatures is a great gulf fixed which the creature can never cross. "Canst thou by searching find out God?" If the gulf is to be bridged, it will be from the Creator's side to the creature's, not from the creature's side to the Creator's. All this is so. But why should it require us to suppose such a relation between God and the course of created existence as makes the Christ-revelation—*which is the form in which God the Creator has bridged the gulf*—simply so much pretense? And pretense the Christ-revelation is if God is not actually what he is here declared to be, namely, a God who has to find his way, a God who knows the meaning of suffering, a God faced with the possibility of continuous frustration, a God to whom the events of time are real events falling within a real order, *and* a God who has committed himself to a cause which will tax all his resources if it is to be realized.

The Scriptures speak of God as having a purpose—Paul says "an eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ" (Eph. 3:11)—but they nowhere describe him as mechanically following an infallible blueprint in the fulfillment of the purpose. That description we owe to the theologians who took their clue to God, not from the revelation and its record, but from the metaphysicians. The Scriptures speak of a God who breasts the future in faith and hope, and who calls men to breast it in the same way. God called Abraham to have faith in him; did not God need to have faith in Abraham as well? The biblical description of God may be anthropomorphic. What of it? Why not say, "Our Father"? It were better to speak of God anthropomorphically and make him *real*, than to speak of him in such abstract terms as to make him a Logical Abacus! The men of the Bible are confident that the resources of God's holy love will prove greater than the resources of that evil power that stands determinedly in the way. The God of the Christ-revelation carries a banner, inscribed *In This Sign I Con-*

quer, and the sign is the sign of a cross. That sign stands for his own utter self-giving. Francis Thompson, in the "Orient Ode," speaks of the sun as

> for the life of all that live
> The Victim daily born and sacrificed,

and then goes on to declare that in that respect the sun is a symbol of Christ the symbol of God. How else than on the ground that he gives his all to the creative adventure does God justify the course the adventure continually calls for? And what other ground is there for faith that what God seeks he will find than just this fact that God gives his all, *the "all" of God?*

Nor does God have a rigid timetable with which nothing can interfere. Heaven is not a railway dispatcher's office! Those unimaginative persons who identify a living movement with the necessary relations of an impeccable dialectic, and who therefore suppose fixed dates within the divine calendar which bind God in chains he cannot escape, understand neither the nature of existence with its element of irrationality, nor the nature of God nor the purpose of God nor the ways of God. God, like man, waits for "the fullness of time" to come, and "the fullness of the time" is the issue of uncounted unpredictabilities. To cancel out these unpredictabilities by subscribing to a Spinozistic determinism or a Hegelian dialecticism is to put apriorism above simple observation and simple experience. *There are a lot of ragged edges in existence!* The consistency of logic is well enough, and for its own purposes it is useful enough, but life nowhere perfectly matches it. There is a lovely inconsistency about life: it is what makes the difference between the living and the non-living. But is God ever inconsistent? Yes, he is! *His inconsistency is his grace*—his dealing with men in ways they admittedly do not deserve, and which leads him to blot out with a tear many a black mark in the records of history. Thus the closing verses of the book of the prophet Micah: "Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth over the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? he retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth in lovingkindness. . . . Thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea." (7:18, A. S. V.) So also Hezekiah: "Thou hast cast all my sins behind thy back." (Isa. 38:17).

We may well believe, therefore, that the creative process is full of possibilities which may or may not become actualities, and that God—*even God*—must determine his action according to what they turn out to be. This does not involve that there are not great impersonal stabilities in the framework of existence. Whatever pattern is being woven into the texture of time, a loom is called for, besides a weaver. In their own way these stabilities bespeak God's absolute power: the demonic, so far from destroying them, needs them for the attempt to frustrate the very purpose they are designed to serve. But it is precisely within this framework of fixed stabilities that that conflict is set whose moment by moment outcome contains always an element of contingency—and God must reckon with this contingency. The contingencies which are inseparable from the course of created existence must be supposed to set some real limitation on God's foreknowledge and on his power of predetermination. The alternative to omniscience is by no means nescience, any more than the alternative to omnipotence is impotence. If we say that God has power sufficient for his purpose and knowledge sufficient for his purpose we say all that is necessary for the needs of religious faith. Speculations beyond this area are interesting in themselves, but they are of no particularly vital significance.

Any consideration of the question of the divine initiative would therefore have to proceed in the light of creative necessity and of holy love. The view being advanced is that *God has no choice about being creative, but has a choice about the kind of creation.*

We have assumed a necessary existence, the undifferentiated prime, which under a necessary law of self-differentiation issues as the three existents, the divine, the demonic, the residual constant. Neither of these is created, since each is necessary, but all three are involved in the work of creation, since creation calls for the divine creativity, the demonic discreativity, and the noncreativity of the residual constant.

God is therefore creative by his necessary nature. He is not a being who *may* create, but a being who *must* create. The necessarily existent who is necessarily creative necessarily creates.

But we have defined the necessarily creative as a personal spirit, and a personal spirit will have *a choice of creations*. What the range of this creative choice may be, we do not know. How many

possible creations God may consider, we do not know. How many possible ends he may set before himself, we do not know. Our speculative endeavor must be limited to the attempt to make intelligible to us the creation we actually know and in which we are actually involved.

If God has a choice of creations, and if his nature is holy love—a fact which can be known only through a situation allowing for its disclosure—then two conclusions would seem to follow: one, that only a creation whose motive was holy love could fully reveal him; the other, that a creation whose motive was holy love would seek the increase of holy love. What else would holy love seek through creativity except more of itself? And how could holy love get more of itself except through the creation of free spirits capable of coming to holy love?

But to do this would lay upon the creative holy love a great price. It would do this because the very process of producing such spirits would provide demonic evil with its greatest opportunity of destruction. The cost of the increase of holy love arises not so much in the holy love itself as in the conditions necessary to bring about the increase. God cannot create wholly from within himself; he can create only by means of what is already existent—the noncreative constant which may carry form, meaning, value, and the discreative demonic which would destroy what is created. He cannot therefore say simply: "Let there be free spirits, and let the law of their nature be holy love!" He can secure free spirits only through a process, and this process is made necessary by the very conditions within which God must create. God may choose *what* to create; but he cannot choose to create without any reference to the uncreative and the discreative. He must secure free spirits against all the force of demonic subtlety.

What modern science has brought to light therefore about the processes of inorganic and organic existences, and about their intimate relationships, represents the apparent necessities of the case. Assuming a creative God, we see that he began at the lowest possible level, insinuating the least touch of creative life into the framework being imposed on the residual constant. Bergson describes this process at length in *Creative Evolution.* Using his own terms of *élan vital* and "matter," he speaks of *élan vital* securing for itself "on the very edge" of resisting matter a foothold un-

imaginably precarious, and from that point on he traces the creative journey toward intelligent man.

By all the evidence the journey was marked by retrogression besides progression, by loss besides gain. Looking back we can discern the general trunk line that was followed, but we discern also countless deviations. The story of the life-movement includes, on the one hand, forms of indescribable monstrosity, whose relics still overwhelm the imagination, with their size, their shape, their ferocity, their sheer bestiality; and it includes, on the other hand, forms small to the point of the microscopic, but in their own way no less deadly—indeed, more deadly—than the immense. Life is a creation of the divine alone, but what the divine creates the demonic corrupts. As the creative stream continued to flow, God saw the work of his hands given outcome which we cannot suppose he regarded as desirable.

Then why did God continue the stream? We can but answer, first, because he was under a creative necessity; second, because creative necessity was allied to holy love; third, because through all the conflict of the creative with the discreative, holy love was seeking the means of its own increase; fourth, because this increase was possible only as there were free spirits capable of coming to holy love; and fifth, because this was the only way in which such free spirits could be secured. What science calls evolutionary method was the strategy of creative holy love, but the strategy of creative holy love grew out of the necessities of the case.

From this point of view, therefore, we may describe organic evolution as that realistic historical process whereby the metaphysical creative divine, through the instrumentality of the metaphysical noncreative residual constant, and against the relentless opposition of the metaphysical discreative demonic, seeks to secure and does secure a race of free, rational, moral, personal spirits, *in* whom the nature of the creative divine could be most fully disclosed, *through* whom the frustrative activities of the discreative demonic could be either most fully triumphant or most fully brought to confusion, and *by* whom the purpose of the divine could therefore be most fully realized.

The result is just such a man as is presupposed in the Christian revelation. For the man of the revelation is a creature involved in conflict, and himself the seat of conflict; he is one who finds a

war in his members; he is one who bears the marks of the creative power, since he is *imago Dei;* he is one who may come under the domination of what is evil; he is one who, on the contrary, may come under the domination of the good; and he is one who as he comes under the domination of the good as his own freely chosen end fulfills the purpose of his own existence, and in so doing crowns the entire creative endeavor.

We turn from the creative necessity to consider the creative freedom, which we have grounded in the fact of holy love. This confronts us with that conception of the fundamental constitution of the divine which is involved in the Christian revelation. The conception is that of the Trinity. Something has been said about this already. It is now necessary to consider how the conception bears on the claim that God is creatively free.

Chapter XIII. THE CREATOR UNDER FREEDOM

We have given some attention to the necessary and irreconcilable contrast of the divine and the demonic. Each is everything that the other is not. The divine has those qualities which are best of all suggested by what we know as the personal. The demonic is characterized not merely by a lack of these qualities but by what we suppose would be the result of these qualities gone into an absolute reversal.

We cannot think of personal qualities existing in perfection except where there is a social bond. This will at least serve to suggest what may be a fundamental difference of the divine and the demonic. The difference would be the difference between necessary sociality and necessary solitariness. The demonic is the absolutely irrational, the absolutely immoral, the absolutely irresponsible, because it is absolutely solitary. So to say it, the "lostness" of the Adversary is in his unchangeable because necessary aloneness. His very nature connotes an essential incapacity to meet the conditions of companionship. He cannot enter into "otherness" because the law of his lawless existence is to destroy. If the utterly social is the utterly good, then the utterly nonsocial is the utterly evil. God is the utterly good, the utterly holy, the utterly loving, because his very being is constituted in "otherness." Who can even *conceive* the goodness of the solitary, or the holiness of the solitary, or the love of the solitary? The concept itself would be a contradiction.

If to some extent the human adumbrates the divine, which, as was set forth in an earlier chapter, is the obvious meaning of the *imago Dei* in man, then from the necessary marks of the human we may get an approximate "pattern" of the divine. The adumbration is very far from being perfect; if it were perfect, the incarnation of God in Christ would have been superfluous. But the imperfect is not necessarily the misleading. What does not reflect wholly may yet reflect in part. The whole Christ-revelation is,

in fact, based on the reality of the *imago Dei.* Both for the purposes of revelation and for the purposes of that revelation operating as a redeeming power in human life, the prior fact of divine-human mutuality is indispensable. Divine revelation made to human minds must be in forms congruous with the structure of those minds. A conception of God that leaves him as a pure Solitary is not a profoundly Christian conception at all. A God like that may suffice for Islam. It does not suffice for a faith that is centered in the conviction that not only was God a being who could enter into the most intimate personal relations with men, but a being who in "the fullness of the time" could, by means of the Word, who was with him in the beginning, part and parcel of his very nature, actually enter the stream of human life and become "Immanuel."

The Christian faith refers the course of created existence to the creative will of God, but affirms an interference with that will. We have already suggested a metaphysic that bears upon this, even to the extent of making it apparent that God *must* create. He is under a law of necessary creativity. *He must create something.*

But when we consider the creation itself we are puzzled, and the more so when we consider it in the light of what we take to be the divine self-disclosure. We hesitate to regard *this* world, so shot through with tragedy, as representing sheer creative necessity. On the other hand, if it represents creative freedom—not what *had* to be but what God *chose* should be—we are still further perplexed.

The perplexity is lifted in part by the acceptance of belief in the Adversary. His discreative activities, arising from his nature as irrational destructiveness, go far to explain what we know takes place.

The perplexity is lifted, if not entirely, at least sufficiently to provide a rational ground for faith, by the acceptance of the scriptural declaration concerning the nature and the purpose of God the Creator, together with the various other truths which the Christian mind sees as going with this declaration. God is motivated, not in the mere fact of his creative activity, but in the purposes he seeks through it, by holy love. In respect of these purposes, the necessary creativity becomes also a free activity, since *what God seeks,* while it still springs from the depths of his nature, is what

he *chooses to seek*. He would increase the area of goodness by means of creatures able to be good. He would increase the domain of holy love by the creation of persons, since persons alone can enter into this domain.

This involves a process, the creative process as we know it, but because God freely chooses the purposes of the process it does not follow that he chooses all that goes with it. There are concomitants of the process which he only tolerates: they are the evidence of the hindering, frustrative, destructive activities of the Adversary. Their presence in his creation transforms, as was said before, what would otherwise be creative joy into creative agony. He through whose creative will comes the burden of mortality is himself the supreme burden-bearer. The holy love whose increase he seeks is the same holy love that knows crucifixion in its very seeking.

Then why, if God is free to choose, and if his chosen ends exact so great a price—the price of universal conflict, the price of universal suffering, the price of universal mortality—why did he continue on his chosen path. Could there be nothing better than this? Since *this* is what we have, and since we have it because of creative choice, we can but conclude that the Creator sees *this*, all that happens to and in the creation and all that happens to and in the Creator himself, as his obtainable best. The very fact of the course of created existence must be accepted as the evidence that it is worth all that it costs. The vast tribulations of nature, the tragic story of mankind—which need not have been save for the chosen purpose of a creative God of holy love who must work out his purpose through conditions set by demonic opposition—are justified in the sight of that Creator who, more than any creature can, receives into himself "the fiery darts of the Evil One."

Do we know why? We know why when we accept the full fact and the full import of the divine self-disclosure as this meets us through the Scriptures and supremely through Jesus Christ. For that self-disclosure means that *God possesses in himself resources sufficient to assure that what he has begun he can complete.* Creation is not just a rash adventure. Even if we call it an "adventure," it is an adventure postulated on the inward adequacies of the Creator. Even if it be true, as was suggested above, that

for God the future is always a real future for which he must wait, even as we must wait, it is a future that God does not fear because he has faith in his power to meet it. We are called upon to have faith in the God who has faith in himself. He has faith in his utter adequacy to any situation which time and the Adversary can bring about.

Why? Because of the way he is. He is no Solitary. He is a Fellowship. His intrinsic manifoldness is the assurance of a weaponry which no Adversary, whose characteristic is solitariness and who therefore "fights alone," can possibly match. That great Christian theologian Olin Alfred Curtis was wont to declare, with characteristic fervor, that "the postulate of creation is the omniscience of God." He held that otherwise God could not know that he could ever secure "a moral person" or ever win his complete allegiance. One must be allowed to disagree with the declaration, and say, rather, that *the postulate of creation and the course it takes is the self-confidence of the triune God.* The immense metaphysical difficulties which go with this are freely recognized, but we have those difficulties on any ground. Does one *solve* a problem when one affirms complete divine foreknowledge and complete divine omniscience on the one hand, and on the other hand human freedom and historical contingency? Rather, the affirmation *creates* a problem. To realize how perplexing the problem is, one may pass by all the subtleties which characterize Christian thought that has followed in the tradition of Augustine, and give oneself to the far less difficult task of reading Boethius' *Consolations of Philosophy.*

The Christian faith has a proper metaphysic of its own, but that does not mean that it can solve every metaphysical problem that may be propounded to it. The immediate purpose of the Christian faith is to bring men consciously under the domination of the creative God of holy love. In order to do that it must set this God forth; it must set him forth in his relation to the course of events; it must set him forth agreeably to what he means for the conflict of good and evil, especially as this is seen in human life. He is truly set forth only as he is set forth in the terms of his own self-disclosure. So set forth, he appears as one who is engaged in a creative and redemptive conflict of his own choosing, and who possesses within himself such resources as justify him in provoking the conflict and as justify us in enlisting on his side.

These resources become apparent when he is seen in the manifoldness of his essential nature as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Christian faith has more than God the Father. It has, besides, God the Word and God the Holy Spirit. Herein is the ultimate basis not merely of the divine-human mutuality considered in itself, but of the divine-human mutuality brought to its destined fulfillment in an intimate personal divine-human fellowship.

All this is not to say that the Christian faith calls for three gods. It does not call for three gods, but for one God. What we have referred to as the divine existent is one being, and there is no loss of that oneness by virtue of the necessary self-differentiation which determines that the one being shall be a Fellowship. The divine existent is one being because it could not exist in any other way. It could not exist as three separabilities. The divine will does not determine the nature of the divine constitution. The constitution is as necessary as the existent. God has no choice about the way he is. The divine Fellowship could not agree to go into dissolution, each member henceforth to go his separate way. Not only must God be, but he must be the way he is, and Christian faith, in the light of the manner of his own self-disclosure, rests in the conviction that the way he is calls for his being described as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. What this involves has already been stated.

This, however, is not said merely for the intellectual satisfaction it may afford. It is said for what it means for the urgent question of man's victory over the Adversary. *Faith's sufficient guarantee for that victory is in what God can throw into the conflict.* He can throw into it all that is meant by the Word or Son and all that is meant by the Holy Spirit. These are forms of the creative will usable to secure the creative victory. The attempt to distinguish their functions has too often befogged Christian thought, and it will not be undertaken here except to emphasize two facts.

One has to do with the function of the Holy Spirit in human life. The Holy Spirit is the form in which God seeks entry into the hearts of men. If there are any of the divine activities in which "freedom" may be supposed to be operative, surely it is here. Both general psychology and religious psychology attempt to ascertain and formulate the "laws" which appear to be determinative of the various kinds of human experience, and nobody will

question the value of the attempt. But there is far from general agreement as to what these laws are, especially in the area of religious experience. All the great exponents of Christianity trace religious experience to the activity of the Holy Spirit. They feel that the New Testament is not intelligible on any other basis, and, indeed, that even the Old Testament is not. Augustine himself believed that any "good" done by any man, were he Christian, or Jew, or pagan, was the evidence that at that point he was under the influence of the Holy Spirit, and Augustine has in general been followed in this respect. Men so far apart in many other ways as Calvin and Wesley would agree on this. The saying of the mystics, "The spirit of man is the candle of the Lord," carries the implication that the candle is not self-lighted: the flame must be kindled by the Spirit of God.

The ways of the Spirit no man may chart with any exhaustiveness. The reason is in the fact that these ways are characterized by unexpectedness, unpredictabilities. They have in them an element of surprise and spontaneity. Nor does the Spirit work in a vacuum. He uses means, and the range of the means is inexhaustible. The memory of a boyhood's dream, the chance perusal of an old letter, the return to some familiar scene, the chance hearing of distant church bells, the repetition of a psalm or hymn learned in early life, sudden loss or danger to oneself or to a loved one—these, and uncounted things like them, have proved many a time to be as "ministering angels" bearing to the soul by the Holy Spirit encouragement, rebuke, conviction, warning, inspiration, a sense of eternal verities.

This diverse and unpredictable activity of the Holy Spirit is one of the means whereby God meets the Adversary. We shall do well to ponder this. One reason for God's confidence in himself as he initiates and pursues the creative adventure is just in the fact that he knows the resource he possesses in the Holy Spirit. It is a resource intrinsic to his very constitution. It is a resource that he may use in his own way according to the requirements of the situation. This is not to say that the resource may not be refused by those to whom it is extended. The freedom of God in the use of the Holy Spirit is matched by the freedom of men to spurn it, at least to spurn it in part. No one spurns it wholly, for there is many an "uncovenanted mercy" that blesses the lives of even

the most recalcitrant. What God does for men without their consent, no one may ever tell. But whether with their consent or without it, God's creative and redemptive activities on behalf of men are his activities by the Holy Spirit, definable at this point as "the executive will of the Godhead."

God can match his Adversary, however, not only by what is possible to him because of the Holy Spirit, but also by what is possible to him through the Word, what John calls "the Logos," who became, by virtue of the Incarnation, "the only begotten from the Father." In the incarnate Word is fully declared, says John, the grace and truth of God. "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him." (John 1:18.)

Christian thought has always made a good deal of what was described as "the cosmic activities of the Word." By this is meant those activities in creation of the eternal Son considered otherwise than as incarnate. There are naturally a number of difficult philosophical questions involved here, over which we need not linger, important though they are for a total Christian view of God and the world. That these questions are not entirely imaginary is apparent from such great New Testament passages as the prologue of the Fourth Gospel; I Cor. 15:22-28; Col. 1:9-20; and Heb. 1:1-4. All that is to be stressed at present is the fact that the Word is intrinsic to God's nature equally with the Holy Spirit, and is therefore a further ground of the divine self-confidence. *An adequate understanding of the nature of God as a Fellowship of the kind described is a sufficient justification of faith in the ultimate triumph of his cause.* The ground of God's confidence may surely be the ground of ours.

Vexed discussions of absolute predestination, absolute foreknowledge, absolute omniscience, and the like, become superfluous once we see that, in contrast with the Adversary, God has for resources both the Holy Spirit and the Word. Such a God will set before himself no purpose to which he is not adequate, difficult though the way to its realization may be. To say that God would not undertake anything whose every detail throughout incalculable ages was not perfectly plain to him so that he ran no risks, is to exchange the living God of the revelation for a mechanical chess player. It is to take all the freedom out of the vast adventure

which creation shows every evidence of being, and to reduce it to a puppet show. That God knows as much about the future as the nature of his purpose requires him to know—this, as was said before, we may safely take for granted. But how he knows it, and how much of it he knows, and what may be the relation between this foreknowledge and what may be known—these are questions purely speculative, and not vitally germane to the life of faith.

But the connection between the Word and human redemption is something different. The ultimate ground and promise of redemption is in the fact that "the Word became flesh." By the Word the divine entered the arena of the human to meet the Adversary where most could be accomplished. Speaking from the human standpoint, this was possible because man was already made in the image of God, with those very qualities which, as Christian thought has always held, constituted the essence of the Word himself, especially in his *filial* aspect. Speaking from the divine standpoint, the entry of God into the human was made possible just in this fact of the Word as integral to the Godhead. Which is to say that all that God does on behalf of men rests back upon his very nature; it is provided for in that nature; that nature is what makes it possible. A creation there must be because God is under a creative necessity; but *this* creation, considered in its relation to human life and experience, could be only because God is such a being as could conceive its purpose, namely, the increase of the domain of holy love, and only because in his constitution as a perfect Personal Fellowship were that Word (or Son) and that Holy Spirit, by whose diverse activities against the machinations of the Adversary God could justify himself in the choice of the purpose which called for *this* creation.

What we are saying, then, is that it belongs to God to create in more than one way because God is more than a bare monad. The necessary divine creativity is divinely controllable because the divine nature, by reason of its mutuality, is internally rich and free. In the necessary exercise of its necessary creativity, the divine must always express some quality of its nature. The divine nature is not that of a Solitary, but that of a Personal Fellowship, and its very variety makes possible a choice of activities because a choice of creative purpose. Always in his creativity he must use the non-creative constant as the "carrier" of his purpose, and always he

must encounter the opposition of the demonic. But the *extent* of his use of the constant, and the *extent* of the opposition arising from the demonic, will be determined by the character of the creation as this, in turn, is determined by the ends being sought. Where God seeks the most he must make use of the most and he must give the most of himself. He can seek no higher end than that which calls for the utmost possible use of all that he inwardly is—that is to say, than when the whole Triune Fellowship is involved. And it is the import of the revelation that to what he is now doing and to what he is now seeking, God gives his all.

A summary of what has now been said, and an anticipation of what is still to be said, may serve to bring the discussion into sharper focus:

1. God the Creator pours into the mold of the residual constant more and more of his own life until at last, in his creature man, is reflected his own image, endowed with the very faculties of the divine so far as this is possible in the created.

2. Against man created in this way, with this nature, and for this purpose, the full force of the demonic is directed, since where God is most fully active creatively, the demonic is most fully active discreatively.

3. In more ways than we can enumerate, God by the Holy Spirit works upon men in order to lead them to an increasing realization of who and what they are and of what they are intended to do and to be.

4. By these means alone, however, God can neither fully reveal his purpose with men nor fully provide for its realization, nor yet therefore can fully evoke nor fully meet the impact of the demonic.

5. What is further necessary is provided for in his actual participation in the creative strife by means of the incarnation of the Word, known among us as Jesus Christ the only-begotten Son of God.

6. It is at this point, where the creative and the created, the truly human and the truly divine, coexist in a complete identity, that the creative divine and the discreative demonic meet in mortal combat: God bares himself to his Adversary in order that the Adversary might the more surely be put to rout.

7. Since all creativity, just because it involves the use of the noncreative residual constant, is consequently open to discreative

destruction, it follows that the Incarnate Son, just because he is incarnate, becomes subject to the attack of the Adversary even in its supreme form, which is death; but the Resurrection attests the presence in him of that which must be divine because the demonic cannot destroy it.

8. This very fact makes possible to men a faith that there is a limit to the power of evil, a faith that the last word is with God—such a God as was revealed in Christ—a faith that there is a reality against which the great swelling tides of death and destruction cannot prevail, a faith, that is to say, which lays hold upon eternal life.

9. Eternal life means a participation in the very life and fellowship of God of such intimacy and of such actuality as that it is lifted beyond the reach of the discreative demonic.

Eternal life in this sense may be a present possession. The man of faith to whom it has become real does not cease to be open to the assaults of the Adversary. He cannot, so long as he has a body by which he is articulated with the residual constant. If the Incarnate Lord could suffer crucifixion, what may not his followers expect? The man of faith might have to fight with wild beasts at Ephesus, in the fashion of the Apostle Paul. The fiery darts of the wicked one may be let loose against him. He may hear the subtle whisper of the fiend bidding him curse God and die. The rising floods of disaster may engulf him. "In perils oft," wrote Paul. To enter into possession of eternal life here and now is not a guarantee of freedom from such things as these, since they are of the very conditions of earthly existence; but eternal life is still *something they cannot destroy*, as it is also a prediction of their final passing.

If what has now been written is a true account of the matter, then we can only say that it implies God's total self-commitment to the creative enterprise in the form under which it is known to us, and of which we are a part. At the basis of the enterprise is his own complex nature, a fellowship of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Holy love is its motive. The increase of the domain of holy love is its purpose. Only through free spirits can such a purpose be realized. It is precisely in the fact of these free spirits that we find the clue to the long story of organic life. In the effort to bring free spirits to their purposed goal, God gives his all. The utmost that his

nature makes possible is what he wills to bring to pass. At the same time, the utmost that his nature makes possible also lays upon him the greatest burden because it brings him most intimately into contact with discreative demonic evil. God, who must create, freely chooses the most costly creation; and the most costly creation to the Creator is that one through which the Creator would, through a race of creatures, realize a family of sons. The provision for this is in the divine Fellowship itself, conceived as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The *purpose* of sonship, the *pattern* of sonship, and the *power* of sonship, are all alike intrinsic to that Fellowship which God eternally is. It is ultimately for the sake of securing such a family of sons, in whose actuality and relationships and experiences and possibilities the depth and the range of his own nature is most fully expressed and revealed, that God, at infinite self-cost, initiates and carries through the great endeavor. He knows both necessity and freedom, even as we do. In his necessity is our necessity, but just as truly in his freedom, the freedom of holy love, is our freedom too. For who is so bound, and who is so free, as those who are held of love?

Part Three

TOWARD A NEW CREATION

The Chapters

XIV. The World View of the Fourth Gospel
XV. The Biblical Portrait of Everyman
XVI. The Tradition of Inherited Guilt
XVII. The Inevitable Rebelliousness
XVIII. Power to Become Sons
XIX. The Church Militant

Chapter XIV. THE WORLD VIEW OF THE FOURTH GOSPEL

In making the transition to a consideration of some of the more specific applications of what has now been said, we shall find ourselves possessed of a curious confidence in both our procedure and our findings if we take the time to consider the significance of the Fourth Gospel. For the Fourth Gospel sees Jesus Christ in relation to a world view which very much in the present book is simply an attempt to expound, and then to utilize for Christian purposes.

The first three Gospels were written to preserve among men a knowledge of the historical facts in which the apostolic faith, savingly proclaimed long before the Gospels were given their present form, had its foundation and justification. That the Gospels as they were finally written were colored by the faith they were written to justify is now generally agreed. This does not invalidate the Gospels nor destroy their historical reliability. These Gospels are always to be read and understood in the light of *the Gospel.* The Gospel itself emerged in the first place out of an unwritten history. When the history was finally written, it was with the purpose to show the connection between the original history and the Gospel. We may quite properly say that the actual but unwritten history gave rise to the Gospel as a great faith in the hearts of a few men and women, a faith which by the sheer force of their testimony spread rapidly to many others. In this was the creation of the Church. The Church, in turn, created the Gospels as written documents, but always with due respect to the actual history whence the Gospel—the apostolic faith—had arisen in the first place.

The Fourth Gospel, however, is less concerned with the history as such, and is much more concerned with its *meaning.* It is less "objective" than the Synoptic Gospels, and consequently is more "subjective." Instead of being primarily a history, it is primarily an interpretation of a history. All the Gospels contain some inter-

pretation, but the Fourth Gospel contains it supremely. *The Fourth Gospel is, in fact, the most profoundly Christian book ever written.* If what it says about God, and man, and the world, and Jesus Christ, and the life that perishes, and eternal life, is not true, then the entire Christian view of things must collapse. The apparent simplicity of the Fourth Gospel is a simplicity of *style.* Through that simple style—simple both in the English and in the Greek—we are presented with the deepest truths of existence.

The Fourth Gospel is not much concerned about the mere chronology of events. It is not much concerned about preserving the exact words of Jesus. The author constructs long speeches, and puts them in Jesus' mouth, in much the fashion of Greek and Roman historians. He is no mere uninspired stenographic reporter. The relation of the historical Jesus to the Fourth Gospel is much like the relation of Socrates to the dialogues of Plato. The dialogues of Plato are literary devices for preserving and perpetuating the essential spirit and the essential message of the historical Socrates. Without a doubt, as Socrates passed through the processes of the mind of Plato he underwent some modification, but the modification is of the form, not of the substance. Equally without a doubt, the historical Jesus underwent some modification as he passed through the processes of the mind of John of Ephesus, but again what was modified was not the substance, but the form. The vessel may be earthen, but it contains a divine treasure. The vessel is the mind of John, a mind at once speculative and creative, a mind utterly satisfied with the faith to which it has come and with the experience which the faith has brought; the treasure is the very truth of Christ. To make that truth vivid and compelling to others, to challenge with its timelessness the mind of his time, to make men realize that here is indeed the truth that will make them free—this is what John undertakes to do.

To accomplish his purpose John uses the historical material in his own way; he describes it in his own way; he arranges it in his own way; judged by the Synoptic Gospels, he leaves a great deal out, and by the same standard he adds much which probably is not strictly historical but rather is imaginative; he throws the thoughts of Jesus into metaphors of his own devising; he elaborates the sayings of Jesus into long discourses; he dramatizes historical moments so that they take on an overhistorical sugges-

tiveness; he employs symbolism, as in the changing of water into wine; he employs analogy, as in the account of the opening of the eyes of the blind man or as in the account of the raising of Lazarus; and he introduces into his account of the relations of the disciples to Jesus insights and intuitions which, by every evidence, they could have come to only after years of profound experience.

In order to give intellectual completeness to his understanding of the meaning of Jesus Christ, John makes use of a very definite "world view." Certain features of this world view were already extant, but John adds something to it that is distinctly new, and in it he sets the gospel in such a way that the result is a strangely coherent and impressive whole of truth. The main features of John's conception may be stated briefly as follows:

There is a primal source of all life and of all good, and this is God. An essential constituent of the being of God is the Word (Logos), and it is because of this Word that God is able to create. The divine creative activity finds itself conditioned and hindered by a hostile factor, "the darkness," which never accepts domination. This hostile "darkness" is the source of all evil: it accounts for the imperfection and the impermanence of the created world. In man the opposition of God and no-God, of light and darkness, reaches its peak: it appears as a "flesh and spirit" antagonism. The more effectively to meet and overcome the opposition, God insinuates himself into the struggle through the Creative Word in a new way: the Word appears in the form of a man. The presence of the Incarnate Word revealed the limitations of "the darkness" and the evil it engenders, for at every point where the two met, "the darkness," or the power of evil, was overcome. The apparent exception was the Cross, where the Incarnate Word was vanquished by death, the last weapon of "the darkness," but in the escape of the Incarnate Word from death, attested by the Resurrection, the victory over "the darkness" was complete. "Eternal life" as a quality of life beyond the reach of destructive evil was seen to be an actuality. Through Christ, himself the Incarnate Word, the purpose of the Creative Word in the overcoming of "the darkness" is accomplished. Christ is therefore "the Light and the Life of men."

We need to elaborate this outline. God, for the author of the Fourth Gospel, is the inexhaustible source of power and truth

and wisdom and life. He is the center of his own forthgoing, and all that goes forth from him is good. This forthgoing bespeaks the presence in him both of a purpose and of the power to carry it out. In this self-determined and purposeful forthgoing consists God's creativity.

The exercise of the creativity, however, discloses a principle of opposition. John calls this, in its most generic sense, "the darkness." It is not something that God *creates*, but something that he *finds*. In the metaphor of darkness and light John suggests the fundamental opposition of existence. He uses other terms for it, especially for the various forms it takes, but always it is this same fundamental opposition that he has in mind. Thus he speaks of God and the devil; of truth and falsity; of love and hate; of earthly and heavenly; of knowledge and ignorance; of freedom and bondage; of flesh and spirit; of life that perishes and of eternal life. The function of light is to dissipate darkness; the function of darkness is to resist the dissipation. All things arise out of the opposition of darkness and light, that is to say, out of the creativity of God seeking to overcome a discreative resistance.

Man himself is the supreme illustration of this conflict. The light that is God is also the light that is in man. It is John's way of asserting the *imago Dei*. Man's life bears the marks of the life of God as nothing else does. The life of man, however, is a part of that very world which at once expresses and resists God's will. Man therefore participates alike in the light and in the darkness. This is his very nature—*an essential duality*. The God who makes him is the God from whom he turns away. God cannot be permanently content with this division. He is as much against the darkness as the darkness is against him. He can seek nothing greater than that darkened men shall be wholly of the light. Such men will be indeed his sons—sons not merely because he made them, but because they have come to walk in the light, even as he is in the light.

To walk in the light, however, men must know what it is. The light they bring with them, the *imago Dei*, is quickly confused and uncertain because of the surrounding darkness, that is, because of the world itself. There must be the world if there are to be men, but the very world that is the condition of men's existence is also the enemy of their true life. The means of life is equally the

means of death. They are born into this world, but only that they might be born into another. If they are not born into that other world, then they abide in darkness, that is, in death.

God, however, did not make men in order that they might remain subjects of darkness and death. Rather, he made them for light and life. He would therefore show them the true light, and he would bring them to the true life. And what he *would* do, he *can* do. He is not exhausted in his primary encounter with the darkness. The issue of that primary encounter is "the world," a temporal achievement only, just because the stamp of the darkness is always upon it. But that in God which is the basis of the first encounter with the primeval darkness, and whose issue is the world, is capable of a second encounter. *This second encounter takes place in the arena emerging from the first encounter.* Or, to put John's thought a little more sharply: God is manifested in the world and its life, but the manifestation is obscured by the very conditions that make it possible; nevertheless, within that world and its life God may make a still further manifestation. The second was possible only by reason of the first. Before the Word could appear as a man, there must be first the race of men. Man as subject by his very nature to the law of sin and death, which is the stamp of the darkness, is man as possible subject of a new creation. The possibility of this new creation is precisely in the activity, but this time a new activity, of that Word in God which gives the possibility of the old creation.

It is through the Word, says John, that the fundamental divine encounter with the darkness is made. Hence, John calls the Word the mediator of light and life. It is through the Word that the light that is God shines into the darkness. It is through the Word that the life that is God enters the domain of death. But this form of the encounter never ends in complete victory. It is necessarily too indirect. God through the Word secures all the endless forms of life with their climax in man, but every form of life is still in bondage to death. Every living thing is dual, because it is compacted of life and the enemy of life, and in man the duality is most marked, most unmistakable, most tragic.

The first incomplete encounter of the Word and the darkness is therefore but a preparation for a second encounter. John puts all this into one short declaration, although his entire Gospel is an

elaboration of it: "The Word became flesh and dwelt among us." Elsewhere the Word works upon the darkness, so to speak, from without. But now the Word comes directly, specifically, personally, into the very sphere of the darkness. The Word appears in that realm in which, until now, the final victory has always been with the darkness, that is, with evil and death. So to say it, he has at last personally broken into the realm of the Adversary, there to give the Adversary battle, meet his worst blows, shatter his domination, release his victims, and bind him with his own chains.

The Word thus made flesh is Jesus Christ. Here among men is the life that is God, the light that is God, the truth that is God, the love that is God. The light that until now has been but faintly seen at last shines clear. Light has come into the world. The life that until now has been uncertain and perishable at last appears in its fullness. The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. The unseen God is now declared. This is the true light, and they who walk by it are delivered from the darkness, and they walk securely.

The purpose for which the Word becomes flesh is the final and complete overcoming of the world. In the Fourth Gospel the term "world" means sometimes the human race, sometimes the whole creation, including man, sometimes the principle of opposition which stands over against all that God seeks and which is the real reason for the evils of existence, and sometimes it would seem to mean all of these together. This last appears to be the meaning in the great saying of Jesus: "In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world."

God has used "the darkness" to bring about a creation—"the world"—which is only a scaffolding. Within that scaffolding he is seeking to bring about a new creation which the darkness can never touch. The Incarnate Word stood unflinchingly over against the world as its complete negation. He refused to be moved by its evil. He refused to participate in its sin. He fought its pain and disease. He met its self-assertiveness by a complete self-forgetfulness. The appeal of the lower he met with an utter loyalty to the higher. He made known the true ends of life. He answered hate with love. Finally he subjected himself to death, the last weapon of the darkness, and by his resurrection robbed evil of its apparent victory. He disclosed a quality of life which the world could

neither give nor take away. And he made known to men how they too could come into possession of this life.

If now we put together much that is distinctive of John, this is what we get: To receive Christ into the life is to be given the right and the power to become sons of God. The sons of God are those who have known a second birth. They are delivered from the law of the flesh, and they come under the law of the Spirit. They pass from darkness into light. Amid the perishable earthly they find the imperishable heavenly. For God so loved the world, lying in sin and death as it was, that he gave out of his inmost life his Son, and he who believes in the Son finds that eternal life for which God first intended him. It was not to judge the world that the Son came, for the world was already under judgment; but he came to save it. The judgment remains upon those who refuse him; it is lifted from those who receive him. These find that Christ is indeed their Life. He is for them the Light shining in darkness. He is the Water of life. He is the Bread of life. He is the Good Shepherd. He is the Door of the fold. He is the Way to the Father. He is the Joy that cannot be taken away. He is the Power equal to every need. He is the Comforter to help and to inspire. He is the Presence that need never vanish. He is the Resurrection that the tomb could not keep captive.

We now see how inevitable it was that so many of the incidents of the Fourth Gospel and so much of its teaching should deal with the process of men passing from death unto life. There are two worlds for John. Into one of these man is born of nature; into the other he is born of the Spirit. The first birth is but a prelude to the second birth. Life "in the flesh" is under the doom of mortality. Life "in the Spirit" is life from which the doom of mortality has been lifted. In one sense, therefore, *the interview with Nicodemus* may be said to dramatize the central emphasis of the entire Fourth Gospel. Nicodemus represented not the outcast persons of the time, "the publicans and sinners." Rather, he represented life at the top. He was "a master in Israel," a member of the council, a scholar, a ruler, a man of high privilege. But all this ceases to be important when the true ends of life are being considered. The things on which Nicodemus prides himself do not make him a member of the Kingdom of God. There are two levels of life: the level which he entered when he was born; the level above that into which he must be born

again. As to the first, Nicodemus had no option: he is necessarily under the law of sin and death. As to the second, he has an option. He may elect to remain as he is; or he may elect to be delivered from the level of mortality, and to be born into that higher level which is eternal life.

All the important incidents of the Fourth Gospel are so many ways of illustrating this truth. The Cana wedding (2:1-11); the interview with the woman of Samaria (4:1-29); the cure of the son of the Capernaum nobleman (4:46-54); the cure of the lame man at the pool of Bethesda (5:1-15); the feeding of the five thousand (6:1-14); the cure of the man born blind (9:1-41); the raising of Lazarus (11:1-46); the washing of the disciples' feet (13:1-17)—these are so many "pictures" designed to make more concrete the teaching. One or two of them may be considered from this standpoint.

The changing of water into wine at Cana may be taken simply as a miracle. But if that is all that it is, then it is the one exception to the rule that all Jesus' miracles were directed to a painful human situation. One finds it difficult to believe that John would introduce his account of the ministry of Jesus with a "sign" which accomplished nothing except to make it possible for a hilarious wedding party to drink to excess, since presumably sufficient wine for the celebration had been provided at the outset.

On the other hand, if we bear in mind the whole tenor of the Fourth Gospel and its manifest method and purpose, it becomes at once evident that the key to the story is in the contrast of water and wine. The contrast is symbolic. It is symbolic of two different worlds. It is symbolic of two different kinds of life. It is symbolic even of two different kinds of social relationships. What John would have us see is that the introduction of Jesus Christ into a situation creates a profound difference. The situation itself must exist already, even as the water did; what the touch of Christ does is to transform the situation.

The truth in question is applied to the beginning of a new social organism, a man and woman becoming husband and wife, the originators of a new family. Here is a *microcosmos*—a miniature society—coming into being, a representation of that *macrocosmos* which is the human race. The new original may develop in one of two directions, it may move on one of two levels. It may be just one

more example of a human family controlled by the same old motives, subject to the same old strains, seeking the same old satisfactions, in danger of coming to grief on the same old difficulties. Or it may be something entirely different. It may be a miniature, not of that larger whole which is perishable human society, but of that larger whole which is the imperishable Kingdom of God. Thus:

> Christ is the Head of this house;
> The Unseen Guest at every meal;
> The Silent Listener to every conversation.

If a person wants simply the miracle, well and good. But if all that is seen here is a good-natured gesture on the part of Jesus to save a jovial gathering from breaking up in discontent, surely something deeper has been missed. If the choice must be made, it were better to have the symbolism without the incident than to have the incident without the symbolism.

For, Cana or no Cana, miracle or no miracle, it is a fact that human social relationships, and in particular marriage and family life, may be based on two diametrically opposite principles. In the one case, the principles are those which may be embraced under the term "this world." These are represented by the *water*. In the other case, the principles are those which may be embraced under the term "other world," or the Kingdom of God. These are represented by the *wine*. One of the great problems of our civilization is that of the instability of marriage and the home. Here is being dramatized, as strikingly as anywhere else in the world, the age-long conflict of good and evil. On whether the Creator or the Adversary captures the fundamental social organism, which is the family, depends more than we can even imagine. It will be well if it shall become increasingly apparent to an increasing number of persons that the symbolism of the Cana narrative has a profound bearing on the problem. The words of Mary have an inexhaustible significance: "Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it."

The interview with *the woman of Samaria* at the wellside sets the same contrast, only with the use of somewhat different imagery, and made the more significant because of the fact of the woman's race. The account of the cure of *the son of the Roman official at Capernaum* also involves the race question, but its meaning far outranges that. It is apparently John's form of the incident narrated in

Luke 7:2-10. Luke is content to tell it as simply one more example of our Lord's healing ministry. John is not indifferent to the factual aspect of the incident, since as a fact it so aptly illustrates a great truth, but it is fair to assume that his chief interest is in the truth rather than in the illustration.

We note at once that the central figure of the incident was neither a Jew like Nicodemus nor a Samaritan like the woman of Sychar, but a Roman. As a Roman, he represented power and authority. Behind him stood the mighty empire of Rome, the supreme embodiment in that day of what Jesus had met in his third temptation, "the kingdoms of the world." From one point of view, the Roman had everything: the eagle which he bore was the sign of a universal domination.

But this Roman was faced with a situation in which he was as helpless as though he had been the meanest serf in the empire of which he was a conspicuous part. His son was ill, and he could do nothing about it. His battalion of soldiers had no power against this insidious foe. In the Fourth Gospel pain and disease are not merely incidental: rather, they are the evidences of the presence and activity of the kingdom of darkness. They belong to the perishable world. They are here only because they must be here if there is to be life at all. But they are not of the ultimate purpose of God. They are the tares in the wheat. They have been sown by the Adversary. They must be tolerated, but there is a limit to their duration. Jesus wept at the grave of Lazarus, and those tears expressed not only sympathy but a resolution which was ominous for the Adversary. The darkness is yet to be dissipated. In that dissipation will be the end of pain and tears and death, for the former things will have passed away, and new things will take their place.

"Jesus saith unto him, Go thy way; thy son liveth." We can take it as meaning just that and nothing more; but we cannot do that if we have caught John's deeper purpose. It is as though he were saying: "The Roman represents a power which is baffled at just the point where power is most needed, and it is baffled for the simple reason that its own power is an expression of the same principle which is expressed in the need. The principle which gives Rome its power is the principle which Rome cannot overcome: instead, it is the principle by which Rome itself will perish. What comes out of the darkness the darkness will at last destroy. It is by

the light which did not come out of the darkness that the darkness will at last be scattered. It is by the life which gives death its opportunity that death will at last be robbed of its sting. So, proud Roman, go thy way: thy son liveth, and he liveth because there is a power greater than that of your vast empire, and you stand in the presence of that greater power when you stand in the presence of this Galilean. You have reached the limit of your resources, but you have not reached the limits of existence. There is still a power that even Rome cannot comprehend, yes! and that even death cannot touch: it is a power of eternal life, and the secret of that power is in this Man's keeping, who holds the keys of death itself." What is the story of the raising of Lazarus but a reaffirmation of this same great truth?

Or consider *the feeding of the five thousand.* Certainly the incident revealed our Lord's deep compassion and called attention to his profound connection with the very sources of existence. In the other Gospels this seems to exhaust the incident. But not in the Fourth. The long discourse on the bread of life, to which the incident gave rise, must be taken as conveying John's deeper insight into what had been done.

The feeding of the hungry crowd solved no problem except the immediate one. These people would be just as hungry the next day as they had been that day. They were not to expect a *permanent* miracle; in fact, since Jesus suspected that some of them did, he was led to utter a stern rebuke. It would be entirely proper to say that the incident showed that from the standpoint of the kingdom of God the presence of hunger in a world of abundance was not to be tolerated. It might even be held that Jesus was illustrating the principles of co-operation and sharing in the attack on the problem of hunger. But he was nowhere suggesting that food was to be expected without work. Those whom he had fed once would go on needing to be fed. It would still be necessary to cultivate the soil. It would still be necessary to prepare against tomorrow. Economic demand would continue to follow even those who had been given one meal, so to speak, straight from heaven. Jesus never intended his action to lead people to suppose that the problem of hunger could yield to any other solution than that provided by industry, intelligence, foresight, and good will.

John himself very obviously treats the incident from this point

of view. The people who had been fed were enthusiastic. This was a prophet indeed! They sought him out the next day, and why not? His first temptation was thereby given dramatic force, and his refusal of it was shown to be the height of wisdom: "Feed the people, and they will hail you as Messiah indeed!" But Jesus was not deceived. "You want more bread," he said in effect. "I gave you bread yesterday, and you are hungry again already, and if I give you bread now, you will be hungry again tomorrow. You must find a way to get your own bread, and to help other people get theirs. Nevertheless, there is a bread which does not diminish by being eaten. There is a bread which is indeed a living bread, a life-giving bread, so that the man who eats it will find a life that cannot be destroyed. Even the manna that Moses gave had to be gathered fresh every day, and it held no promise of anything more than physical existence. I am the bread of life: he that eateth me will live by me, for I give my life for the life of men."

It is impossible to escape the force of the contrast here. There are two kinds of life. One is subject to the law of change and decay; the other is not. One is determined relative to the flesh; the other is determined relative to the Spirit. To be overwhelmed—or otherwise!—by the miracle of the loaves, and to fail to see that the event, outside of its more immediate purpose, was intended as a symbolic representation of a truth which eventually stands in its own right—to do this is to be in the same class with those who the next day sought out Jesus, but whose motive in coming he at once understood, as was evidenced by his words: "You seek me, *not because you understood the meaning*, but because you ate of the loaves, and were filled." No man has the secret of eternal life simply because he believes that Jesus miraculously fed the hungry. He has it only as he made his own the truth expressed in Jesus' own words: "This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die."

The Fourth Gospel contains much else of the same tenor. Enough has been said to establish the claim that the author conceived two worlds to which human life is relevant. One is the world in which evil is everywhere present and active. The other is the world which is above the reach of evil. In the first the will of God is perpetually challenged and hindered. In the second the will of God completely obtains. Yet it is only through the

first that the second can be realized, just as it is in the area of the first that the actuality of the second is to be demonstrated. Life in the Spirit is not to be wholly separated from life in the flesh, any more than eternal life may proceed with no reference to transient life. To live the life of the Spirit in the conditions of the flesh, beset with the impact of evil, knowing continually the assaults of the Adversary—this is what the Son of God did; this, indeed, is the very meaning of the Incarnation. The creative entered the realm of the discreative to introduce into the realm of the discreative that which would eventually bring it into subjection. The victory of the Son of God prognosticates the victory of all those who through his perfect Sonship find a sonship for themselves.

But the victory of the sons can be won only as the victory of the Son was won. He met the embattled power of darkness. He put himself between human souls and the Adversary, but those who find deliverance through him must continue to do as he did: *they too must put themselves between other human souls and the Adversary*. The Cross is a once-for-all event, but only as its principle is repeated in those who understood its centrality can the one event come to its consummation in the life of the world.

The new family at Cana, beginning in the accustomed way. Nicodemus, conscientious representative of a regimented morality. The woman of Samaria, sunk in a degrading licentiousness. The Roman officer, embodiment of organized power. All utterly different, yet in one respect all alike—held in the bondage of the flesh, content to move on life's lower level. And what says Jesus? To the couple at Cana—the natural resources are insufficient. To Nicodemus—you must be born again, and from above. To the woman of Samaria—you need to find the well that never runs dry. To the Roman—you need to tap a power greater than your empire. Of similar import where his words following other incidents. To the hungry whom he had just fed—you need other bread than this, and I am that bread. To the blind man whose sight was restored—you need another light than that of the sun, and I am that light. To Lazarus and his loved ones—you need another life than that which death can destroy, and I am that life. To Pilate, baffled by an alleged king, whose subjects were not asked

to use force—My kingdom is not of this world, and therefore it cannot be destroyed.

This is what meets us in the Fourth Gospel. It accounts for John's use of what may very properly be called dramatic symbolism. Everywhere lower things point to higher things.

To stop with the symbol is to stop with the evanescent; to pass on to what is symbolized, and to possess it, is to find fullness of life. The Presence is absent from the symbol, but through it the Real Presence may be reached.

John had learned at the feet of Plato. He had learned more at the feet of Jesus Christ. He had found in Christ that "divine word" which Plato had only yearned for. Led by that Spirit, which he himself said that Christ had promised for "bringing all things to remembrance" and for "guiding into all the truth," he wrote this book, the very quintessence of scripture, the climax of the long process of revelation, the final resting place of the Christian mind.

The result of that inspiration which found in John so perfect an instrument for this final achievement is a book so simple that a child can read it, and so profound that although one spend one's life in pondering it, one never exhausts its meaning. The book makes every other view of man's existence and its manifold relationships appear as inadequate. Standing where John sets us, we see the present as the nexus of the eternal. We see the visible as the assurance of the invisible. We see the commonplaces of life as the alphabet of the language of heaven, and as we piece the letters together into words, and put the words in order, we see that they *make sense*. And what they say is that the conflict of good and evil is a conflict of the Creator and the Adversary, a conflict initiated by the Creator and continued by the Creator, but a conflict justified by the Creator's purpose, since to achieve that purpose he made his utmost sacrificial endeavor in his personal entrance into the very arena of the conflict. By that entry he assures, for those who will have it so, a new creation whose one law is holy love.

Chapter XV. THE BIBLICAL PORTRAIT OF EVERYMAN

THE GOD WHOM FAITH FINDS AS SELF-GIVING IN JESUS CHRIST stands forth as the great commanding reality. This is the burden of what has now been said. No longer, however, is the reality something vague, elusive, indefinable. Instead, it takes on clear meaning and apprehensible form before the believing mind. In the totality of the fact of Christ is a final self-emergence of God in history which bespeaks him "once and for always." It bespeaks his creative power, his righteous judgment, his holy love, his providential control, his opposition to all evil, his gracious concern for every human soul, and the dark conditions which make his expression of that concern an activity of tragic cost. It bespeaks the steady persistence of his purpose to the utmost sacrificial limit, his available nearness to help and sustain in every hour of need, and his profound personal involution in both the necessities and the contingencies of the human drama. It bespeaks the inner constitution of his being as a fellowship of Father, Son, and that third who is the Holy Spirit, such a fellowship being that which alone makes possible all his chosen procedures in creation, revelation, redemption, and sanctification. Such are the truths of God for that faith which in this respect finds in Christ its absolute.

But that story which in its completion gives us the truth of God is the story which in its completion gives us also the truth of man. It has already been emphasized that these are part of the same whole. In the revelation of God is the revelation of man. The fact of the divine-human mutuality is both elucidated and brought to its purposed fruition. The anthropology is correlative with the theology. In the doctrine of Christ which gives the doctrine of God is given also the doctrine of man. In the completed revelation is a completed coherence. Tennyson notwithstanding, the truth of God and the truth of man "is" (we will keep Tennyson's singular verb here!) given not in the "flower in the crannied wall"

any more than it is in Wordsworth's "impulse from a vernal wood," but it is given in the whole fact of Christ. It is true that God becomes a problem for man according as man becomes a problem for himself, but it is not in learning the truth about himself that man learns the truth about God: rather, it is in learning the truth about God that he learns the truth about himself. He does this, however, only on the condition that Christ becomes his guest in the House of the Interpreter.

Whatever else may be true or not true about the Bible, it tells a human story in the sense that it is rooted in human life and experience. The book, as a book, was forged on the anvil of history. The Bible witness to God is primarily to God in his relation to men, and the Bible witness to men is primarily to men in their relation to God. The relation of men to each other and to their world is but a derivative of their relation to God. Human folly has a place in the record as truly as human wisdom, but by what standard is folly known to be folly, and by what standard is wisdom known to be wisdom? The Bible describes equally human sinfulness and human sanctity, but it describes them as what they are, and it makes perfectly plain which is which, because the character and purpose of God determine the point of view. The truth of man is comprehended in the truth of God.

The persons dealt with in the Bible, and the situations implied, are almost infinitely diverse. There is hardly a human type that we do not meet in this book, and hardly a human weakness or human virtue it does not deal with. In respect of its sheer human universality, the biblical gallery of portraits outruns Shakespeare himself. It brings before us literally "all sorts and conditions of men," from the lowest to the highest, and it is far from presenting the human situation in optimistic terms. Dark enough are some of the pages in, say, the book of Judges and the books of the Kings. Within a period of twenty years, the northern Kingdom of Israel had six different kings, every one of whom except the last was assassinated, and the assassin succeeded his victim on the throne! Much that is contained in such books as Proverbs and Ecclesiastes is significant for what it implies about the ordinary behavior of the people to whom the counsel, the exhortation, or the warning is directed.

A human story indeed! Man is described as caught in the vortex

of contending forces, himself the prize that is sought. We see the inevitable way in which his collective life embodies and expresses the same conflict which characterizes his more individual life. We see him as able to reach out to a power greater than himself, and to relate himself to it and to be controlled by it. We see him as able to ignore any such power, and to go a way of his own choosing, with its devastating consequences. The story is almost endless in its rich diversity, and the fact that God is described as breaking into it in all sorts of ways only adds to its authenticity.

Yet as we consider the entire story, which is to say all the details in their collective concreteness, we see that it looks in one direction, and that it comes to focus at one point. What is not apparent at any one stage of the story becomes apparent when the story is complete. We see now that the argument of Edghill in *The Evidential Value of Prophecy* was too neat and tidy: he seems rather to impose the pattern upon the records than to read it out of them. But the fundamental drive of the argument was sound enough: a coherence was in the making, but it must wait for its emergence until the raw material was all given. It does finally emerge. The Prophet anticipated by every prophet, the Priest anticipated by every priest, the King anticipated by every king, appears in and as one and the same Person. This Person, this man, is he by whom all other men are measured. The concrete individual, Jesus Christ, stands over against the concrete manifold which is recorded in the Bible, and he is seen to be the explanation of that which in part produced him, into which he is interwoven, and yet over which he towers. He was born of a woman; he was made under the law; yet his coming bespoke "the fulness of the time," the fruition of the divine-human mutuality. *Christ is the measure of all men*, of what they are not that they ought to be, of what they ought to be that they are not. Protagoras and his followers will pardon the liberties taken with their famous maxim.

For we have in Christ not only a real man, but man according to the original divine idea. Speaking after the manner of Plato, the perfect pattern in the heavenly places, which never before had found fitting expression, at last appears in the complex web of time. The invisible is made visible. He is made in all things like

unto his brethren; he is tried and tempted as every man must be; he knows the impact of the dark demonic as every man must know it; he remains in himself "without sin," and yet suffers himself to be identified with all the sin of all the world, both to declare and to fulfill the will and purpose of God. He took the "form," the very nature, of a "slave," which is to say that he made his own that which is common to every man, yet never, throughout all his incalculable servitude, did he depart from that original divine "idea" according to which man was made but which in no man before was perfectly set forth. We can but say, "At last, at last, *this is he!*" Then we say still more. We say: "In what this man is we see what God is, and until this man appears, God is not truly seen and man is not truly seen, but in his appearing the mystery of God is unfolded, and no less is unfolded the mystery of man."

So God and man meet as the man Christ Jesus. It takes both to make this Man what this Man is. The Incarnation is, to speak, "the existential moment" in the agelong history of the relations of man and God. The *totally other* becomes the *totally here*. The downthrust of the perpendicularity of the divine cuts across the horizontal of the human, and the point of their fusion becomes forever a fixity which nothing can destroy. It is the historical appearance of radical novelty. It is the second of the three crucial events of time in relation to eternity. These three events are respectively *creation*, which is the birth of time and of history; *incarnation*, which is the mutual invasion of time and eternity, of creation and Creator, of human and divine; and *consummation*, which is the end of history and the end of time in a divine-human fellowship in which God is once more "all and in all." All three events are indispensable to the Christian view, and all three are humanly incomprehensible.

The ultimate reason for all that God does, and for all that man means and is, and for all that the Adversary would hinder, may therefore, allowing for the necessary inadequacies of human speech, be thus stated: This reason is that every man should come to see himself over against Jesus Christ; that every man should be shattered according as he sensed the contrast; that every man should accept for himself the ensuing judgment; that every man should see in Christ his own possible other; that every man should

identify himself with Christ in an act of living faith; that every man should thereupon know himself and be known of God as "a man in Christ"; and that when henceforth God looked upon a man, he should no longer see just a man in his solitary and sinful individualness, but should see instead a man united to Christ, and a man therefore whom nothing need separate from the love of God. For it belongs to such a man—which is to say that it is a possibility for every man, since this is why every man ultimately is—to declare with complete sincerity and as the deepest fact of his life: "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." (Gal. 2:20.)

The cruciality of the Incarnation is therefore in what it reveals alike of God and man, and of what it accomplishes alike for God and for man. In this respect it illuminates that crucial event which we can only describe as the beginning of things, and it anticipates that other crucial event which is their consummation, while at the same time it indicates the tragic cost of the whole vast endeavor.

If we may now consider the biblical man a little more fully, we must say what has been said before, and recognize that he is confined to a limited section of the total human story. The human story is reflected in other great literatures outside the Bible. But nowhere else does the story directly issue as it issues in the Bible record, although it may well be realized that the biblical issue is still the proper issue of the human story, from whatever age or area it may come, and in whatever terms it may be told. That is simply to say that *nowhere else is the human story complete.* It is not complete even in the literature of Greece, because whether we consider Greek poetry or Greek philosophy or Greek drama, we are always left with an unanswered question. The proud humanistic boast, "Man is the measure of all things," comes out of that very Greek life and thought which is the most complete evidence that man cannot even measure himself. Neither Homer nor Pindar, neither Solon nor Aristides, neither Pericles nor Demosthenes, neither Socrates nor Plato nor Aristotle, could give an authentic answer to the last question. The Greek tragedians stated that question with an approximation to finality; who,

indeed, ever stated it better? One thinks of the dire predicament of Antigone, as expressed by Sophocles:

> Desolate and friendless I go down
> Alive, O horror! to the vaults of the dead.
> For what transgression of Heaven's ordinance?
> Alas! how can I look to Heaven? on whom
> Call to befriend me? seeing that I have earned,
> By piety, the meed of impious?

Or the same poet's expression of the even more dire predicament of Oedipus:

> O marriage twice accurst
> That gave me being, and then again sent forth
> Fresh saplings springing from the self-same seed,
> To amaze men's eyes and minds with dire confusion
> Of father, brother, son, bride, mother, wife,
> Murder of parents, and all shames that are!
> Silence alone befits such deeds. Then, pray you,
> Hide me immediately away from men!
> Kill me outright, or fling me far to sea,
> Where never ye may look upon me more.
> Come lend your hand unto my misery!
> Comply, and fear not, for my load of woe
> Is incommunicable to all but me.

It is sheer, undiluted tragedy—"a human will caught in the coils of destiny and struggling in vain to escape"—*and the only answer to it is more tragedy still.* The final word of the leader of the chorus is in complete keeping with the situation that has been set forth. Evil triumphed:

> Dwellers in our native Thebes, fix on Oedipus your eyes,
> Who resolved the dark enigma, noblest champion and most wise.
> Like a star his envied fortune mounted beaming far and wide:
> Now he sinks in seas of anguish, whelmed beneath a raging tide.
> Therefore, with the old-world sages, waiting for that final day,
> I will call no mortal happy while he holds his house of clay,
> Till without one pang of sorrow all his hours have passed away.

Which is to say that the conditions of a happy life are such as no man may expect to meet! Man exists to be baffled! But biblical writers know better.

The God of the Bible is the explanation of the biblical *man*. The biblical *man* is, so to speak, the precipitate of all the *men* of the Bible. For certain purposes it is possible and even proper to read the Bible with a certain cool detachment. We do that when we read it purely as history or purely as literature. There are numerous critical questions connected with the Bible. At times the critical interest will be uppermost, and no purely emotional considerations must be allowed to interfere with the application of the recognized canons of criticism. The best-loved of all the psalms is the twenty-third. We call it the Shepherd Psalm, and the majority of Bible readers still regard it as "a psalm of David." But the scholar who attempts to determine the actual authorship must try to forget the beauty of the psalm, the profound experience it portrays, the essential truth of its description of God's relation to the trusting soul, and certainly the memories of his childhood that associate the psalm with "the Shepherd King." For the time being only one thing is important—to determine who did or who did not write the psalm.

But the critical interest need not be permanent. Even the critical scholar is a man! He has the spiritual hungers of a man, and the psalm may speak to him quite apart from any critical conclusions he arrives at.

This distinction may be operative thoughout the whole Bible. I may read this book, not simply as the story of many men, but as *my story*. I may say, "The biblical man is I." The potentiality of all this is already in me, and much of it in actuality. These sins are my sins; these follies are my follies; these joys and sorrows are my joys and sorrows. The warnings uttered to men are uttered to me. The rebukes that are given are given to me. What is there here that I cannot make my own? I ponder these solemnities and these raptures, and they find echoes in my own soul. What else can the Bible do but "find" me, when it is so clearly my own self-portrayal! The voices that these men hear, I also hear; and the responses they make, surrender or refusal, I also make. There is not a name in this total record that could not, on occasion and in principle, be attached to me.

What did Adam do that I have not done? What could Achan and Nabal and Jonah do that I have not done? I too have hidden in the garden from the presence of the Lord. I too have sold my

birthright for a mess of pottage. I too have reported that the land of promise is too difficult to be possessed; the mighty sons of Anak have made me feel that I am as a grasshopper. I too have clamored for the golden calf, and I too have disclaimed responsibility for having made it. I too have fled in fear from Jezebel, and have hidden in the cave of Horeb, only to be haunted there by a sound of gentle stillness. I too have brought "the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul." I too have demanded that the prophet be driven from the altar; it was so much more comfortable to be soothed by the droning priest.

Many a time I have cried out respecting stone walls, "The temple of the Lord are these!" and I have forgotten that the true temple of the Lord is the humble and contrite heart. Many a time I have tempted the Nazirite to evil lest by his austere living he disturb me, and many a time I have bidden the prophet keep silence that I receive not his rebuke. Many a time I have turned my back on a Nineveh I hated, and have taken ship from Joppa to Tarshish to escape, albeit in vain, the voice of conscience. Many a time I have been an unimaginative Ezra, and have robbed of their proper right the children of the foreigner, *just because* they were the children of the foreigner. Many a time I have arrogantly forbidden the stranger his right of access to healing and light.

I am the priest and the Levite who pass by the stricken traveler. I hear the shocked exclamation, "This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them," and I recognize my own voice. I am the younger brother, and the older brother as well. I protest at the waste of the gift of love—because I covet the gift for myself. I hide my talent in the napkin. I tell my soul to take its ease, to drink, and to be merry. I covet the best places in what I take to be the Kingdom—one more of the sons of Zebedee. As I listen to the prayer of the Pharisee, I know I am listening to myself. I am in the crowd that shouts "Hosanna!" and as willingly I am in the crowd that shouts, "Crucify him! We have no king but Caesar." I am one of the soldiers who cast lots for the seamless robe that was patiently woven by the fingers of Mary; and when the Lord is laid in the tomb I help roll the stone to keep him there to trouble me no more. When the tomb is found empty, I go to see for myself, but I do not believe. If I do not stone Stephen, I at least hold the garments of those who do.

And when I see men strangely moved by the Spirit of God, it is my voice that cries, "They are drunk!" When Ananias lies as he brings his gift, I know that his lie is mine. When Simon would find an easy way to spiritual power, and would use it for his own selfish ends, who am I to profess to be shocked? These men of the church at Corinth, sensual, selfish, gluttonous, arrogant; how can I blame them for sins that are my own? That Diotrephes who loved to have the preeminence, and for his own pride's sake would grievously injure the cause of Christ, how easily I could substitute my own name for his! Have I not, with those of the church in Ephesus, left my first love? Have I not, with those of the church in Pergamum, cast a stumbling block before others? And have I not, with those of the church of Laodicea, been neither one thing nor the other?

Where in this book do I not find myself? Someone who knows me with an intimacy that is sheerly incredible has here written my autobiography. Each of these men and women is other than I, yet in each of them I see something of myself reflected. Disconcertingly frank and unbiased is this book when I use it, as I may —perhaps must—as a mirror. It makes me look directly at myself, and I see my own chagrin. A voice thunders at me, "Thou art the man!" and I know that the voice speaks truly, and I respond, "It is I indeed." A gallery of portraits? Yes, indeed. But still one quintessential portrait: *mine!*

But as I consider the total biblical man, I know that I can be other than I am. A miracle of transformation appears as a possibility. That portrait I see is not wholly I; it reflects something sinister. I cannot wholly repudiate those sinister features, yet I can wish them away. "An enemy hath done this."

If I will, I may look again. And I do look again, and another portrait appears. For now I am Abraham responding to the call of God. I am Jacob fleeing from Esau, but overtaken by God at Bethel, and forced to wrestle with a mysterious Presence at the ford of Jabbok. I am Moses at the burning bush. I am Caleb claiming Hebron for an inheritance, fortifications and sons of Anak notwithstanding. I am Elijah confident and unafraid in the presence of privileged sycophants. I am David trembling before the wrath of fearless Nathan, and crying: "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me."

When I hear Amos declare the utter righteousness of God, and Hosea his unfailing mercy and compassion, I do not doubt, for I have known that righteousness and I have felt that mercy. In the year of the death of King Uzziah, I go with Isaiah to the temple, and the vision of the Holy God that comes to him is not his only: it comes to me as well. When Jeremiah announces the futility of the external and the finality of the covenant written on the heart, I know he is right: he is but saying what I too must say. The warnings in Proverbs against the seductions of Mistress Folly but echo my own experience, and the praises ascribed to the Lady of Wisdom are praises I gladly sing.

In this psalm and in that I hear the aspirations and the testimonies of thousands of men who have long since passed from the earth; yet their voices are not still, for these are my aspirations, and these are my testimonies. When they declare that the Lord is *their* shepherd, they speak for *me*. When they declare that the Lord makes their feet to stand in slippery places, their declaration is mine. They know a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night, and they go safely, which is to say that I go safely. Good news comes to watching shepherds from the heavens above them, and the good news in coming to them comes to me. Men busy with their daily occupations hear a voice, "Follow me!" and I am one of those men. Lame and halt and leprous men lie in hopeless hope around an erstwhile stirring pool, and I with them, until a Stranger with a far greater potency than any pool touches me, and I arise—"whole again." Men gather quietly, wonderingly, in an upstairs room off a narrow street, and in their hands are placed bread and a cup, and a voice speaks: "This is my body, this is my blood, given for you," and I am one of the eleven of the twelve who are there, and I tremble to think how easily I might have been the twelfth.

And at last, in this book, I see "a man in Christ," and I know that if I am not that man also, it is because I will not be. This man in Christ came through the needle's eye. This man in Christ hated what he now loves. This man in Christ had to pass embattled hosts of prejudice and pride of place before he could whisper, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" This man knew the fiends that assembled "to view the last of him." I hear him:

In labors more abundantly, in prisons more abundantly, in stripes above measure, in deaths oft. Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day have I been in the deep; in journeyings often, in perils of rivers, in perils of robbers, in perils from my countrymen, in perils from the Gentiles, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; in labor and travail, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fasting often, in cold and nakedness. (II Cor. 11:23-27, A.S.V.)

A man in Christ! I hear him again:

But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the exceeding greatness of the power may be God, and not from ourselves; we are pressed on every side, yet not straitened; preplexed, yet not unto despair; pursued, yet not forsaken; smitten down, yet not destroyed; always bearing about in the body the dying of Jesus, that the life also of Jesus may be manifested in our body. (II Cor. 4:7-10, A.S.V.)

And again:

In everything commending ourselves, as ministers of God, in much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses, in stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labors, in watchings, in fastings; in pureness, in knowledge, in longsuffering, in kindness, in the Holy Spirit, in love unfeigned, in the word of truth, in the power of God; by the armor of righteousness on the right hand and on the left, by glory and dishonor, by evil report and good report; as deceivers, and yet true; as unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and behold, we live; as chastened, and not killed; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things. (II Cor. 6:4-10, A.S.V.)

He knew the wiles of the Adversary!
And once more I hear this man in Christ speak:

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or anguish, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? . . . Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor heights, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Rom. 8:35, 37-39, A.S.V.)

Nor *powers*—the powers of rampant demonic evil.

The biblical man is transformed into the man in Christ, and the man in Christ becomes the true issue of the long human travail. For *this* have all things worked together—and verily they have worked together for good. This is what the Creator sought, and this is what the Adversary used all his powers to prevent. This is the ultimate precipitate of the creative and redemptive conflict. This is the triumph of the divine over the demonic. This is the child that came of the birth pangs of the ages. In a man in Christ the very God sees of the travail of his soul, and is satisfied.

And this is I, since I am justified by my faith, and what my faith is I shall myself at last be. The perfect righteousness of Christ is imputed to me. His victory is mine because I follow in his train. His security from the foul touch of the Beast who once seemed to have locked him fast in the impregnable tomb is the promise of my security, for nothing can pluck out of his hands that which he consents to hold. As a man in Christ, which is to say, as a man who has taken Christ for what faith affirms him to be, and has given himself over to this Christ without reserve, and has no other desire than to manifest Christ in all the ways of life, in personal behavior, in social relations, in self-giving service—as such a man I can humbly and gratefully and sincerely say that I am, according as what is now promised is fulfilled, the man that, in the final purpose of God, all these other men and women were meant to be. They and I are launched on an uncertain sea to reach a common haven, and the haven is to become a man in Christ, let the Adversary rage as he will.

Am I truly this man in Christ? If I am not, I may be. I am the heir of all the ages, and this is my heritage. For this every man was born, and for this was I born. This was what the Adversary would fain prevent, and this is what he has not prevented. In so far as I am not this man in Christ, I am not truly myself. In the creative Word I have my first birth, and in the redemptive Word I have my second birth, and this Word is Christ. As I confront the one Man to whom all the diverse paths of human history and experience lead, I confront the one Man who utterly judges me, and the one Man who as utterly saves me because he earned the right to do so. In what he endures at the hand of men, which is to say in what he endures at my hands, all the depths of men's

sinfulness, which is all the depths of my sinfulness, stand disclosed. In what he endures for the sake of men, which is to say in what he endures for my sake, all the depths of holy love likewise stand disclosed. The evil that breaks him is my evil; the deliverance that is accomplished is my deliverance; the veil that is rent is the veil that obscures my vision; and in the Holy of Holies that is disclosed as the veil is rent I see the immolation, for all men and therefore for me, of "the steep and trifid God."

The light that falls from Christ falls on God, and it falls on man. He who sees God in Christ sees himself in Christ. The creative agony is transformed into redemptive joy. The Adversary has helped to achieve what he would fain have prevented. The discreative has subserved the purposes of the creative. But the revealing light is from above, not from below. Christ is not man self-projected to his height. Rather is he *God stooping*, to show

> sufficient of his light
> For us i' the dark to rise by.

In the stooping God, wherein appears manhood according to the the divine idea, the human story, baffling, tragic, paradoxical, as reminiscent of the demonic as it is of the divine, finds its key.

But only as what is demonstrably possible for one is universalized. The portrait of "a man in Christ" comes to completion only as it becomes also the portrait of the race. There can be no such thing as salvation in isolation from others. The end of that divine "adventure," which turns out to be in actual fact a vast creative-redemptive conflict with demonic evil as the subtle Adversary, is a "Kingdom," not a solitary subject, a "family," not a lone son, a "household of faith," not a desert hermit or a pillar-saint whose one concern is his own soul. "For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. . . . There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus." (Gal. 3:26, 28.)

Chapter XVI. THE TRADITION OF INHERITED GUILT

THE BIBLICAL MAN IS A SINFUL MAN WHO MAY BE TRANSFORMED into "a man in Christ." A man in Christ is a man who comes increasingly under the control of Christ as he increasingly understands him. This requires that Christ, in whom God stands finally self-revealed, shall be the creator of the man's faith in God, the object of his love, the ground and inspiration of his service, the Lord of all his life, and the pattern to which he seeks to conform. This is not something to be accomplished once and for always. The process of deliverance from sinfulness and sin is marked by "crises," but no one crisis is final. A crisis registers a deeper insight, a more satisfying experience, a more complete surrender, but the gain thereby made still needs to be built into the life and made a permanent possession. This, however, is only to prepare the way for a new crisis, with the still deeper experience that it will make possible.

> We build the ladder by which we rise
> From the lowly earth to the vaulted skies.

Oliver Wendell Holmes, in familiar lines, has immortalized the chambered nautilus as an example of the increased expansion of the interests, insights, and achievements of the earnest soul. The nautilus abandons the shell for which it has grown too large. It leaves its "low-vaulted past." If it does not, it perishes as the victim of its own lethargy. "Move on or die!" is the imperative command of Nature to all her children. The command is no less imperative in the things of the spirit. Life tends to inertia, but inertia is fatal. To stay where you were is not to stay where you were, but to have descended to a lower level. This is the point of Paul's exhortation: "Whereunto we have attained, by that same rule let us walk." (Phil. 3:16, A.S.V.) Only the living can die. Only the high can fall. Only the salvable can be lost.

Life is conflict: this is our thesis. A given battle may be won or lost, but the campaign never ceases. At least it does not cease as long as *the power to take sides* remains. When that power disappears a man is really no longer a man; he has lost his most distinctive mark.

A man comes into life to meet a foe and gain a victory. He does this because it is of the purpose of God that he should. He is not guaranteed the victory; what he is guaranteed is the chance to gain it. For life

> Is just our chance o' the prize of learning love,
> How love might be, hath been indeed, and is;

and if we remember all that Browning means by "love," we can accept his judgment. We are here to learn and to enter into and to be possessed of that love that, in the climactic line of Dante, "moves the sun in heaven, and all the other stars."

But when we turn from saying this and consider the human situation, we are weighted down by the dread sense of our mortality and all that it bespeaks. "To learn love." Not simply the love that draws man to woman, and parent to child, and friend to friend. But a love that overleaps all barriers and transcends all the oppositions which life—which means also sin and selfishness—sets up against it. The love which we have the one chance to learn is love which has come to the grace of selflessness. There is no higher grace for a man, but there is no more difficult demand that he may be called upon to meet. True love makes for selflessness. That is simple within the limits of the chosen circle, but the chosen circle is only the proving ground of love, the seed plot of selflessness. To take the selflessness that is acquired in this little area of life's sweetest intimacies, and carry it over into life's most far-reaching relationships—this is to have learned love indeed. And few there be that learn it.

Few learn it because the very constitution of human nature makes it difficult. The problem of the transformation of life from self-centered creaturehood to selfless sonship and brotherhood is set by the very nature of the case. What is involved here is not the arbitrary will of a sovereign God, but the character of God's purpose and the nature of those necessary conditions within which the purpose is to be carried out.

Some very dreadful things have been said about God by Christian thinkers because they never saw the situation which God confronted. They traced the situation directly to his will instead of seeing the situation as a concomitant of his purpose. In failing to allow for the activity of the Adversary, they came under necessity of relating every specific event, every specific fact, to the will of God. There were those who eased the burden this made for thought and faith by allowing for the disturbing influence of human freedom. They held that men must be free in order to fulfill God's purpose for them, and then that this freedom became the very means by which the purpose was thwarted. The truth of this position is not for a moment being questioned; what is in question is the implied supposition that this wholly accounts for the tragedy of the human situation. The fulfillment of God's purpose is indeed hampered by human freedom, but human freedom is not the only hampering factor. Even in man's own case, his freedom and the freedom of others is far from accounting for all that befalls him. Some of the most fearful experiences that overtake men cannot be traced to anyone's freedom or to anyone's choice. They are integral in the situation, and the situation is what it is because of the activity of a variety of factors—the divine, the demonic, the human, yes! but also the contingent, the necessitated, the unpredictable, the free.

Traditional Christian theology has traced not only the sad human situation, but the whole cosmic situation as well, with its oppositions, contradictions, and calamities, to the primal act of human disobedience. The ingenuity which has been expended on this point is nothing less than amazing. The first sin of the first man has been treated as absolutely determinative of the character not only of the human race but of the very universe itself as it now confronts us. All the ills of life are traced to this one common root. In the early church Augustine gave classic form to the expression of this belief. Augustine taught that Adam was created both free and good, and able to know and to do God's will. Adam used his freedom to disobey God and to turn away from him. The result was a corruption of his entire nature. His intellect became clouded, so that he could no longer discern the truth. His will became bound, so that he no longer had freedom. The corruption of his nature was transmitted to his posterity: the race

was poisoned at its very root. The curse laid upon Adam extends to all mankind. The guilt of one became the guilt of all.

Most of the other familiar Augustinian doctrines were determined by this one. Predestination came into play, distinguishing the elect and the reprobate. The elect were those to whom God chose to extend his grace, and break the entail of sin and guilt. The reprobate were those to whom God chose not to extend his grace; in their case, the curse took its normal course to eternal punishment. The ultimate justification of this extension of grace to the elect was in the death of Christ. His death was a substitution for the punishment normally due to the elect. Christ died in their stead, but he died for no others. Why God should choose some to be saved, and not others, and why he should choose these rather than others, is inexplicable.We only know that this is what he did. He thereby exercised his sovereign right to do as he would with his own. He carried out in his own way his own eternal decrees and his own secret counsels. Wretched and lost men have no rights of their own before the Creator whom they have disobeyed; their only right is to be treated as God chooses to treat them. The true church is made up of the elect, but since it does not belong to any man to be able to determine who are the chosen and who are the reprobate, the church opens its doors to all on certain conditions. The sacraments are the prescribed channels of grace, and it belongs to the church to control these channels. Outside the church, therefore, there is no salvation; but it does not follow that all who share in the sacraments will therefore be saved. The ultimately determining fact is the will of God, and what that may be was settled for every human being long before he was born.

There were those in the early church whose thought did not take this direction. In the main, Augustine fixed what is known as the Latin or Western tradition in Christian theology. There was, however, a Greek type of thought which was different from this, and it set the so-called Eastern tradition. Indeed, Origen of Alexandria, a pronounced Platonist, and the greatest of the Christian Greek theologians, had a totally different conception of things from Augustine, even to the extent of teaching that eventually all would be saved. The human soul, said Origen, is a forthflowing from God, and what comes from God will at last return to God. The soul is incurably nostalgic, and God is its true home.

The influence of Augustine on Western Christianity is too great to be estimated. The Roman Catholic conception of the church, of the hierarchy, and of the sacraments, is primarily Augustinian. The one most effective answer to Augustine's doctrines of eternal decrees, secret counsels, the absolute divine determination of the course of events, and the like, is *the human story itself!* When that story is looked at in the light of the Christ-revelation, the one sheerly incredible conclusion is that all this is exactly as God intended, exactly as he willed. If God were as utterly in control as Augustine supposed, the human story would have been vastly different. Even the Persian poet exercised the right of criticism, although admittedly his fatalism robbed the criticism of all point:

> Ah Love! could you and I with Him conspire
> To grasp this sorry Scheme of Things entire,
> Would not we shatter it to bits—and then
> Remould it nearer to the Heart's desire!

There are, in actual fact, features of the theology of Augustine which the Roman Catholic Church did not accept. It modified his view of the effects of the Fall, his view of the absoluteness of the divine sovereignty, and his view of election and reprobation. On the other hand, in its claims respecting the hierarchy, the significance of the church, and the efficacy of the sacraments, it secures in its own way much the same results that Augustine secured in his way. It still claims, at least officially, that outside the church is no salvation; and it still claims, at least officially, to be that one true church in which alone salvation is to be found.

Augustine's influence, however, is not to be limited to Rome. Luther, in his early days, was an Augustinian monk, and while there is no evidence that Augustine founded the order in the sense that it came to have in the thirteenth century and later, the order took much of its rule and practice from a brotherhood that Augustine formed in 388 and actually instructed for some time. Luther was therefore nourished in the Augustinian theology, and was not greatly affected by the modification it underwent at the hands of Thomas Aquinas and others. Indeed, after his break with Rome, Luther became so out of sympathy with the medieval Scholastics that, if anything, he became more Augustinian than ever. At the same time there is evidence that he was strongly at-

tracted to the writings of Irenaeus, a Greek apologist of the late second century, and himself steeped in the Greek philosophy, which he regarded as a form of "the preparation for the gospel." Luther's views of human nature, of the far-reaching effects of the Fall, of the utter moral helplessness of mankind, of predestination, and the like, were, however, largely those of Augustine.

Calvin was, if anything, even more Augustinian in his theology than was Luther. Again and again, as one reads the *Institutes* in their later form, one hears the voice of the great Bishop of Hippo. It is not necessary to labor a point that is so generally recognized. When Calvin writes, as he does: "The reprobate suffer nothing but what is consistent with the most righteous judgment of God"; and "God offers his mercy to all who desire and seek it, which none do but those whom he has enlightened, and he enlightens all whom he has predestinated to salvation"; and "It is acting a most perverse part to set up the measure of human justice as the standard by which to measure the justice of God" (Bk. III, chap. 24, Secs. 14, 17)—when Calvin thus writes, he writes entirely in the spirit of Augustine. The marvel about Calvin is that he can write such things and very much more like them, and still write, in these same *Institutes*, one of the greatest treatises on prayer ever written (Bk. III, chap. 20). Indeed, with a curious irony he follows this treatise on prayer with a chapter in which he expounds, in calm and measured logic, the theme of "Eternal Election, or God's Predestination of Some to Salvation, and of Others to Destruction."

In a word, Protestant theology in general has accepted what might be called the anthropology of Augustine, even when it has gone no farther. John Wesley himself, for all his profound differences from Luther and Calvin at other points, agrees with them in his view of the Fall and of its devastating effects upon human nature. In fact, Wesley saw these effects reaching out into the universe itself, and profoundly changing its character. According to Wesley, all things were good when they left the hand of God. "It was good in the highest degree whereof it was capable, and without any mixture of evil." (Sermon LVI.) Then what happened to change it all? One thing only: the sin of Adam. Thence alone came all the evil of the world, all its pain, all deformity, death itself. The sin of Adam changed the very constitution of mankind, and the constitution of the world itself. Since the world was

created as a paradise because it was created for a good man, when the good man became an evil man the character of the world was changed accordingly. Wesley further agreed with Augustine, Luther, and Calvin, that the sin of Adam was transmitted to all his posterity through natural generation; the guilt of the racial head became the guilt of the race.

This teaching was held by all its exponents to be the tenor of scripture. In particular it was derived from Paul, especially from Rom. 5–8. It is, in fact, a fair surmise that but for a few passages in this section of Romans the most difficult features of the teaching outlined above would never have found their way into Christian theology. Those who defend the teaching claim to find support for it throughout the scriptures, but speaking generally the clue to this interpretation of the scriptures is taken from Rom. 5–8. Not only so, but it is an interpretation which sadly fails to do justice to the most explicit scriptural teaching of a quite contrary sort. It is not too much to say that if the entire Bible from end to end were treated as a discourse on a single text—as it was suggested above that it might be—that text could very well be John 3:16: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life." (A.S.V.) That is the quintessence of the evangel, which is to say that it is the quintessence of that divine self-disclosure of which the scriptures are the record. Any interpretation of the total scripture testimony, climaxing as it does in the whole fact of Christ, which does violence to the plain and unmistakable meaning of that one focal verse is defective: it begins at the wrong place, it operates with the wrong principle, and it arrives at the wrong conclusion.

In saying this, we are not to overlook certain obvious facts, alike of existence itself, of human experience, and of the biblical record. Because one disagrees with Augustine at the points specified does not mean that one straightway agrees with his opponent Pelagius. The anthropology of Pelagius is as much an extreme in one direction as Augustine's is in the opposite direction. The actuality of the human moral predicament is not for a moment being questioned. It is through the force of testimony that can in no-wise be gainsaid that one must conform to the biblical-Christian tradition that sees mankind involved in a great tragedy, from which

it cannot extricate itself. It belongs to no man to identify his *ought* with his *actuality*. There is a hiatus there which he cannot but recognize.

Nor is it to be denied that there are vast differences in human opportunity and in human capacity. Because we hesitate to account for these in the traditional way does not mean that they are not recognized, or that they are not factors carrying a profoundly determinative significance. Every man knows something of that mood in which he feels drop away from him all excuse for wrongdoing, consequently admitting that he deserves his lot. Of the two men in the parable of Jesus, the publican is much more truly human than the self-righteous Pharisee. Any man who comes under conviction of sin will frankly confess that his deeper problem is the problem of his own sinful heart, and that this is something he *finds* to be so rather than something he has deliberately created. His agitation concerns not the particular sin, but *the wrong deep within himself* because of which the particular sin was committed. "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me" is any man's prayer once he has truly looked within.

It is just as normal for a man who has learned the secret of peace with God to attribute his new experience to the unmerited grace of God. "There, but for the grace of God, go I," is not a piece of pharisaical complacency; it is a profoundly Christian feeling, and the man who does not know it has not yet taken the true measure of life's moral hazards.

Nor yet is it to be denied that there are undoubtedly those who betray a much greater sensitivity to the appeals of the Holy Spirit than others. We could almost express the situation, using the language of tradition, by saying that the effects of the Fall seem to have been far less devastating on some than on others. Indeed, the English Scholastic, Alexander of Hales, sometimes spoken of as the first Christian Aristotelian, said of one of his former pupils, known as Bonaventura, "the Seraphic Doctor": *In fratre Bonaventura, Adam peccavisse non videtur*. If, however, there be those in whom Adam seems not to have sinned, there are others in whom he seems to have sinned with unrestrained abandon!

Just as certainly we must recognize the reality of corporate relationships. We cannot easily brush aside the conceptions of corporate guilt and corporate righteousness. The more we emphasize

racial solidarity, the more we must allow for these conceptions. No man may wholly isolate himself. He is at best a fragment, and he bespeaks a larger whole. The corporate conception becomes dangerous only when it is made absolute, and this is precisely what happens when the entire race is adjudged sharers in the guilt of Adam. It is no less dangerous when made absolute even in respect of Christ's perfect righteousness, and its "imputation" to sinful, even if chosen, men.

And certainly no Christian will deny the reality of divine grace, nor will he doubt that it will be through the divine grace alone that he finds deliverance from his sinfulness and its consequences. He will always bow to Paul's great affirmation: "By grace have ye been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not of works, that no man should glory." (Eph. 2:8-9, A.S.V.) But the whole meaning of the Christ-revelation is that *God is gracious in himself*, in his very nature. A God who chooses some and passes by others because it pleases him to do so may properly be said to act graciously toward those whom he chooses, but he is still not a God of grace. A God of grace has a gracious purpose for all, and the fact that he must wait his time to exhibit that grace only shows how true and abiding the grace is. A God who is gracious in his very nature, a God whose deepest law is holy love, cannot possibly be conceived as entertaining "secret counsels" which justify him, as is taught by both Augustine and Calvin, in deliberately leading some men into ways more and more evil just in order that he may appropriately punish them for these same evil ways! We must face boldly all the complex structure of human life and human society, whence arise countless differences among mankind, relationships that degrade as well as relationships that exalt, and incentives to evil-doing for some, while others find persuasions to righteousness—all this we must boldly face. But we must face it as men who have seen "the glory of God in the appearing of Jesus Christ."

Perhaps we may now venture to suggest three of the profounder difficulties which stand in the way of acceptance of the traditional Christian anthropology.

In the first place, the traditional teaching virtually destroys individuality. The exponents of the teaching treat as one fact Adam, the human race, and any given man. Once the conception

of Adam as sinful is established, the sinfulness of every man is established. The original perfection of Adam was the original perfection of every man. When Adam lost that perfection, all men lost it; that is to say, Adam lost it for them. Because Adam's perfection was my perfection, it follows that Adam's sin was my sin, and Adam's guilt was my guilt. The punishment of Adam was every man's punishment, and therefore mine. For the fundamental purpose of defining the relation of men to God, Augustine and his followers pass with the greatest of ease from Adam to the human race to the individual. When they have described the condition of Adam they have described the condition of the uncounted millions of human souls that constitute the race. That I may see in the story of Adam my own story, is true enough; but that is not the procedure. The story of Adam is seen *in me;* it is made my story without any least reference to my own attitude; I am condemned and judged guilty unheard. I am born lost because Adam lost me when he lost himself.

This is making the corporate an absolute category, and is paying no least respect to individuality. Nobody today will deny that there is such a thing as racial solidarity; it is the presupposition of all our corporate conceptions at other points. One of the most fruitful and suggestive of moral principles is the fact that one man may, as we say, "put himself in another's place." But that is a voluntary act; it is an identity in sympathy, never in actual fact. No man may make himself another man. All the recognition in the world of the fact of social mutuality cannot change the permanent self-identity of the participants in the mutuality. I am I, and you are you, and if you and I lose ourselves in each other, it is only emotionally, never ontologically. Abnormal cases of split personality or transposed personality are nothing to the point here, just because they are abnormal; abnormality may not determine normality.

Therefore I cannot be Adam, and Adam cannot actually be I. God may attach consequences to what Adam does, and I may be involved in the consequences; this principle is, in fact, operative throughout the entire social structure. But involvement in the consequences does not involve me in responsibility for that which was the cause of the consequences—unless. To cite the Old Testament story of the destruction of the family of Achan as a punish-

ment for Achan's sin (Josh. 7) proves nothing about the *guilt* of the family. The *imputation* of guilt at certain social levels may have some warrant in social necessities, but from the standpoint of absolute morality it is impossible. Even the *voluntary assumption* of guilt—the central principle in the Christian redemption—is not possible in the terms of absolute morality; it is possible only because the moral is transcended by a principle of higher worth. The transcendence of morality is morally justifiable, but its violation never is—and morality is violated when a person not guilty is declared by another to be guilty and treated accordingly.

What, then, about the qualifying "unless" indicated above? The whole issue moves around it. The statement is to be completed thus: Involvement in the consequences does not involve me in responsibility for that which was the cause of the consequences, *unless I in some way make the original deed my own.* Nobody can make it mine for me; I can only make it mine for myself. If I assent to the deed, if I morally approve it, if I repeat the deed in principle, then I become a participant in it, but in no other way. "Be not partakers of other men's iniquities!" But if we are partakers, then, and only then, we stand in the same condemnation. Which works out to mean that while the sin of Adam may have involved the race, and therefore me, in certain disastrous consequences, personal guilt is not one of those consequences, unless and until the principle of Adam's sin has also been accepted and repeated.

In the second place, it is highly questionable whether the traditional interpretation of Rom. 5–8 does justice to Paul's thought. It is perfectly plain that Paul says the things he is alleged to have said: what is not so plain is that he means what he is alleged to have meant. The ordinary view is that Paul takes it for granted that Adam was created both perfectly free and perfectly good, and that no other man ever was. The ground of the supposed freedom of Adam was in the fact that God laid upon him a command, which he would not have done had Adam been unable to obey it. The ground of the supposed goodness of Adam was in the fact that he was a creature of God, and God could create only the good. Adam therefore—so runs the supposition—had a "nature" which no other man has ever had, because no other man was ever created free and good. It is interesting to observe that God could create a free and good man when he created him *directly;* but all human

beings since have been created through other human beings, they are neither free nor good—yet the responsibiilty for these non-free and nongood persons is not at all with God, but *with the persons themselves for having been made that way!* But in what other way could they have been made?

Apart from this, however, we are quite justified in inquiring for the evidence that Paul actually supposed that Adam was such a man as the traditional interpretation declares. Speaking about himself, presumably as an example of mankind in general, Paul says: "I find a law in my members, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me." Paul nowhere suggests that such a "law" was not also operative in the "members" of Adam. The very fact that Adam disobeyed must be regarded as evidence that he was subject to an inner conflict. If he had been the perfectly free and perfectly good man he is supposed to have been, he could never have sinned at all. God is said to have created a morally virtuous man, perfect in all respects, which is the one thing that even God could not do. The significant thing about Adam was his *temptability*. He could be enticed to known evil. Why could he? Because there was already that in him which cooperated with the enticement, and therefore made it possible. Even Adam was disobedient at heart before he was disobedient in deed: the deed was but an expression of that prior condition—a condition as "natural" to Adam as it is to any other human being.

The Genesis story itself calls for this. Did not God lay a prohibition upon Adam? Did he not attach a threatened penalty to the prohibition, in the event of a violation? Do not the prohibition, the disobedience, and the penalty all imply that Adam was not the perfectly good man to begin with that has been supposed? The most the story would warrant us in saying is that Adam was created innocent, but since when was infantile innocence to be equated with genuine moral goodness? That kind of goodness does not come as a creative gift; it comes by way of tribulation. Goodness has to be contended for, both because of its very nature, and because of the character of the fundamental human equipment. God created that equipment, but he created it through the given situation, and it is through that same situation that the purpose of the equipment, namely, the realization of moral goodness, of holy personality, is to be realized.

We have no reason to doubt that this was the case with Adam. He lost his encounter, as it was certain that he would, but the loss was the real beginning of his moral experience. The reality of his manhood is not in some hypothetical innocence but in the fact of that lost encounter. It is the sinful Adam who, so far forth, stands for us, and with whom we may identify ourselves, whose failure we can understand, and into whose punishment we can enter. The clear supposition of Paul is that he and Adam were in the same predicament, and for the same reason. He and Adam were the seat of a similar conflict, and for a similar reason—the war in the members. The fruitage of that war is sin, disobedience to the law of God, and the fruitage of sin is "death," separation from God, just as true "life" is fellowship with God.

It is true that Paul says that "by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin," but what else could he say? How else could sin enter the world except through a man? Only a man can sin. And how else could "death," in the sense that Paul means, be produced, except by sin. There is an intended relation of man to God which is man's true life; sin frustrates it; and that frustration is death, the destruction of life. Paul adds to the statement just quoted: "And so death passed unto all men." But he gives the reason: "because all men sinned." The tense of this verb in the Greek has led commentators to take the statement to mean that all sinned when Adam sinned. Such a sweeping declaration, however, should have more support than the tense of a verb, especially when the declaration is not manifestly the intent of Paul's argument as a whole. What Paul actually says is that, just as Adam sinned, so all men sin. Adam's sin is typical, not all-inclusive. It is the *principle* of sin, rebellion against God, that Paul emphasizes, and the principle is operative irrespective of the *form* the sin may take. Unlikeness in the form still means likeness in the principle. (See Rom. 5:14.)

Again, it is true that Paul says: "As through the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, even so through the obedience of the one [Christ] shall the many be made righteousness." (Rom. 5:19, A.S.V.) But why is it supposed that Paul does not mean the two sides of the contrast to be interpreted in the same way? Nowhere does Paul say that Christ's perfect obedience operates *automatically* to make us righteous. If there is anything that

Paul insists on, it is that we have to do something about that perfect obedience before it can become significant for us. Then why the supposition that an automatism that is not operative in respect of Christ's obedience is operative in respect of Adam's disobedience? When Paul says that we are "justified by faith," that is, made righteous by faith, he does not mean that we are made righteous by doing nothing. Faith is not an abstraction. It is not something that just happens to a man without his knowing it. Faith, the faith that makes righteous, means *a man having faith*, a man repudiating one attitude and adopting another, a man trusting, a man venturing, a man committing himself and then accepting all that goes with the commitment.

Does not the analogy hold good of the other side of the verse quoted? If we have to do something to bring it to pass that we enter into Christ's righteousness and its results, then it would seem that we must do something to enter into Adam's disobedience and its ensuing guilt. What must we do? We must assent to it, accept it, yield to its principle, make it our own. In a word, we must disobey before we can be declared guilty of disobedience. And this is precisely what Paul himself says: "Know ye not, that to whom ye present yourselves as servants unto obedience, his servants ye are whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness." (Rom. 6:16, A.S.V.)

In the third place, the traditional theology at the point being considered is complicated by the naïvete of its assumption that Adam was created as a mature and full-grown man who suddenly finds himself confronted with a novel moral situation. That this should have continued to be assumed even as late as the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries is entirely understandable. The Genesis narrative was taken as literal history. It is quite possible that Paul so took it; one says this even while protesting against much of the traditional interpretation of Paul's use of the *mythus*.

But we live in the twentieth century, and it is no longer possible for us to use the *mythus* in the traditional way. There are certain contemporary theologians who still think that the Genesis narrative, interpreted as it was by Augustine and the later Protestant Reformers, is a sufficient framework for Christian thought. This is simply an attempt to put back the hands of the clock. The essence of the divine self-disclosure and its bearing on the problem

of human redemption is not to be confused with the temporary modes of its expression, not even those found in the Scriptures. The timeless needs the timely, but the timely remains timely only as it changes. The chambered nautilus provides more than one analogy! When the vessel threatens to burst and to spill out the treasure, it were wise to secure a new vessel. We cannot permanently keep our religious conceptions isolated from our conception of things in general. The problems do not change, but the situation in which they are set changes.

Our concern, our *Christian* concern, is not with the mind of the eighteenth century, which has passed away forever; it is with the mind of the twentieth century. We cannot challenge that mind by talking in a foreign tongue. We can challenge it only as we can show that we are alive to its predicament, and alive to its doubts and questions, its hopes and fears. The origin of sin, the law of its working, its individual and social ramifications—these are to be considered and understood agreeably to our understanding of human origins in general, and to our understanding both of individual and social structure, and of the infinite ramifications of life with life and of life with the rest of existence.

Specifically, we say therefore that *how sin comes into the life of a human being today is how sin came into a human life anywhere.* If by Adam is meant the first really human being, we know how he fell into sin by knowing how we fell into sin. Adam's story may be my story; but none the less truly, my story is Adam's story. And the story of every other man.

Chapter XVII. THE INEVITABLE REBELLIOUSNESS

THE PRECEDING CHAPTER DEALT WITH SOME OF THE GRAVE DIFFICULTIES which, from the modern point of view, attend the traditional teaching concerning the origin of sin and the so-called transmission of guilt. The frank recognition of these difficulties, however, still leaves us with the situation with which the teaching was designed to deal. A different view of Adam from that which is postulated in what has been known as "original sin" does not necessarily call for the surrender of the idea of "original sin," any more than the continued acceptance of the idea means the continued acceptance of the postulated view of Adam. On any view, man finds that he is himself his own moral problem. On any view, he is faced with the war in his members. On any view, he finds in himself a drag on his efforts to do and to be as he believes he ought. The spirit of rebelliousness is intrinsic to him as naturally constituted, and this fact is the essence of "original sin."

Today, however, we have a different conception of the creative process and of man's relation to it from what was even possible a few generations ago. The question is not that of the demonstrable truth of this conception. It is at least theoretically possible that the time may come when the conception will be abandoned and another take its place. That possibility cannot properly prevent us from using for the purposes of the Christian faith and its more adequate formulation the conception that now in general obtains. The mind of our time must be approached with some reference to its moral outlook. It is a serious matter to give the impression that the Christian faith is outmoded because it is expressed in outmoded forms. There is always a proper place for the valiant declaration: "Here I take my stand. I can do no other. God be my helper!" But we want to be sure that the place at which we elect to take our stand is sufficiently vital to warrant the resolve. Peripheral matters are always adjustable. It is of central matters that

we are justified in saying that they are the same yesterday, today, and forever.

We are to inquire by what processes the power of that evil in human life, which is sin, may be brought under control and replaced by the power of holy love, to the end that the Adversary may be frustrated and God's purpose to come into fellowship with men brought to pass.

Preliminary to this inquiry is another. It is an inquiry concerning the original rebelliousness which sets men over against God and constitutes the problem of how the rebel may be transformed into an obedient son. Instead of considering the first part of the question from the standpoint of a hypothetical history, it would seem to be wiser to consider it according to the processes of human experience as they confront us today. When we approach the question in this way, three elements are seen to be involvd. They are respectively the biological heritage, the cultural heritage, and the psychological process itself.

By *the biological heritage* is meant everything that enters into the structure of the human body. It is a commonplace of modern thinking that the body of the human infant is a focal point of the universal life. A million fine strands here meet and mingle as in a living ganglion. To disentangle these strands and say whence each came is beyond the power of the most learned of men. All that we can do is to recognize the fact that it is so. But this same body is also the foundation and the promise of a future character and a future experience of increasing range and significance. Anyone who accepts the theory of evolution as applied to the human kind accepts also both a theory of physical continuity and a theory of creative psychical reality tied to the physical, made possible by the physical, and nurtured by the physical. We think of Browning in "Rabbi Ben Ezra":

> Let us not always say,
> "Spite of this flesh today
> I strove, made head, gained ground upon the whole!"
> As the bird wings and sings,
> Let us cry, "All good things
> Are ours, nor soul helps flesh more, now, than flesh helps soul!"

Personality is not just body, nor just soul, nor even soul and body; personality is body-soul, and we must say that irrespective of the numerous problems the fact may create.

For this bodily equipment, which is a heritage from the distant past, is likewise the seat of impulse, instinct, and desire. Resident within it are capacities which will issue in thought, judgment, memory, association, imagination, and the like, capacities and fruitions which only the dull and unreflecting thoughtlessly take for granted. There is, indeed, no greater miracle than that of emerging and maturing personality as the concomitant of bodily growth, and men talk about it, describe it, analyze it, theorize about it, as though it were a mere "of course" instead of inexplicable mystery! The lament of Keats in *Lamia* has many applications:

> Do not all charms fly
> At the mere touch of cold philosophy?
> There was an awful rainbow *once* in heaven:
> *We* know her woof, her texture; she is given
> In the dull catalogue of common things.
> Philosophy will clip an Angel's wings,
> Conquer all mysteries by rule and line,
> Empty the haunted air, and gnomed mine—
> Unweave a rainbow."

And, shall we add? reduce a man to a chemical formula or a biological accident!

The body, through which personality comes to fruition, is the sole instrument through which personality carries on its commerce with the rest of the world. Both the world and society reach us through the body, and it is through the body that we reach society and the world. "Spirit with spirit can meet"—yes! but only through a means which is neither of the meeting spirits. The body is nexus—cosmic nexus, racial nexus, social nexus, moral nexus. And this fundamental and indispensable instrument, with all its resident powers, is a pure *datum*. It is in the most literal sense a "given." It is integrated with that necessitatedness which is the spindle from which is woven the web of a man's life. The very structure of the body, the mechanism of its separate organs such as the eye, the ear, the larynx, the hand, the whole system of its inner relationships, the indescribably complex workings of the

nervous system—all these are a heritage, and in this heritage are the makings of destiny.

We may be impatient of the type of predestination associated with Augustine and his followers, but this is not to be freed from the concept of predestination. We are predestined to be human beings, and to have the powers that we have, and to live in the world we live in, and to walk the path that lies ahead of us to the goal to which the path leads. It is a dread lot that is ours, and it may well cause us to tremble! This body fact, with its infinite structural ramifications, gathered out of the universal life struggle as its final harvest, is the most determinative single actuality that we know, and it is laid upon us as an absolute necessity. There is a sense in which we can truly say of it that *it is we*, because whatever we may become we shall become because of this. Virgil's unforgettable and untranslatable line, in which his much-enduring hero laments the "tears" which inevitably attend man's mortality, "*Sunt lachrymae rerum, et mentem mortalia tangunt*," does not say everything, but it echoes a universal feeling. The human lot is inescapable by the human person, and it is rooted in the human body. Whatever freedom we have is circumscribed by the bodily heritage, and when we realize that the whole universe is involved in the production of that heritage, our necessary articulation with the movement of existence becomes the more impressive. And as to the point at issue, we can but say that no view of the origin of sin and of the course of the moral conflict can be acceptable to the modern outlook which does not begin with the recognition of the biological heritage and which does not see that heritage as the raw stuff of character and destiny.

By *the cultural heritage* is meant the total social situation into which the given life comes. A human being is not simply a born body. He is born at a certain time and place, and into a certain set of circumstances, and the time and place and circumstances have a determinative significance equal, in their own different way, to that of the biological heritage. These things set the cultural level, and the cultural level plays upon the growing life with a formative impact that may be nothing less than dreadful. In the course of time a man may achieve a measure of objectivity toward his cultural heritage, but long before he can do that it has had its will of him in many ways, and never will he wholly escape from its

marks. In ways of whose significance he is quite unaware at the time, he becomes the subject of numerous prohibitions on the one hand, and of stimulations no less numerous on the other hand. Chains were fastened around him before he could even realize what was happening. He may in due time achieve some extrication, but all the chains will never be cast off. Even when he no longer feels their conscious pull, the pull will still be operative.

> Limits we did not set
> Condition all we do;
> Born into life we are, and life must be our mould.

Every growing person is all unwittingly involved in a behavior pattern which will do much to establish his standards of right and wrong, proper and improper, for the rest of his days. He may, again like the chambered nautilus, outgrow his shell, but some shaping from the outgrown shell will still remain. Even a person's general conceptions, his broad understanding of things, his philosophy, is determined largely by the cultural heritage. Social pressures are in the main pressures of the cultural heritage, and the cost of resisting social pressures only those know who have tried to resist them.

The sense of guilt is tied up with both forms of the heritage, the biological and the cultural. It may arise from violating a social sanction, or it may arise from submitting to it, and biological features are involved in both. The judgment, "I ought to follow this custom," or the judgment, "I ought not to follow this custom," are convictions inseparable from the personal and moral process. The precise origin of the *form* of the ought, that is, of the bare feeling of oughtness, is always debatable, but there is no debate about the *material* with which the form operates: that material is supplied from the individual's situation. As it turns out, it is, in fact, an indispensable condition of moral progress that the individual shall be able to evaluate and challenge the requirements imposed by his cultural heritage, but the attainment of this objectivity is itself a moral achievement of the first order. The social critic is first a self-critic. In demanding social reformation he is revealing a reformation in his own personal heritage of culture. Everything about a man disposes him to cultural conformity, because that is the way of ease. Only, the way of lethargic ease is

the way of death. Unthinking conformity is the herald of personal and moral decay.

We have, therefore, to say in respect of the cultural heritage what we must say in respect of the biological heritage: it is a principle of determination, but there is an accompanying factor which is the promise of some independence and freedom in the control and use of the heritage. We can never act save as persons tied to the heritage, but included in the heritage is always the power to be more than its helpless slave.

By *the psychological process* is meant the process of growing a person. The two types of heritage just considered become operative long before the stage of personal awareness is reached. Physical birth does not mean that a complete person is now produced. The process of physical gestation is simply replaced at birth by what might properly be called the process of social gestation. The biological has made its contribution; it is now the turn of the social and cultural. The growing child is being formed in countless ways by influences of whose significance he is entirely unaware. Many of his attitudes and many of his reactions are established before he is conscious of what they are. Many of his most stringent prohibitions and many of his most habitual responses are wrought into the very structure of his being through the impact of the social milieu, and he does not know what is taking place.

But this is not the whole story. The process that has been described cannot be altogether determinative because it is also the process of producing a *will*. This fact saves the emerging person from being a complete automaton. The same means whereby he is being made subject to formative social pressures, both negative and positive, both restraining and imperative, is also the means whereby it is being assured that he will eventually be able to consider these pressures critically and offer them, if need be, some resistance. This growth of a will is manifest in the increasing self-control, and in the increasing sense of direction. What can be more random than the motions of the limbs of the infant? Yet those random motions are the raw stuff of what will some day be intelligently directed activity—grasping, pulling, and pushing, walking, running, and climbing. Similarly with the infant's random gurgles, mutterings, and cries; they are predictive of the ordered speech of the orator and of the moving power of melodious song. All this

because the same social gestation which hedges life about in a thousand ways also creates the conditions by which a will and an intelligence begin to appear.

The process, however, has a still further concomitant: it creates and nurtures a necessary *self-centeredness*. Properly understood, the saying is indisputable: "Self-preservation is the first law of life." The human infant's predominant interest is in himself. He wants certain things, and the things he wants are those which minister to his sense of well-being. What does not cater to this sense arouses protest.

It is true that left to himself the human infant would very quickly perish. He has less provision for speedy self-care than the young of any other species. A corollary of this is in the fact that human infancy is the longest infancy there is. This prolonged infancy carries many consequences. One of these is that the social-cultural heritage is able to exert its pressure for a longer period and to make a deeper mark. Another is that the long period of his obligation to the offspring profoundly influences the human parent, and tends to encourage in him the qualities of foresight, self-forgetfulness, frugality, and the like. At the turn of the century Henry Drummond made much of this in his account of *The Ascent of Man*, especially in the famous chapter on "The Struggle for the Life of Others." Before Drummond, John Fiske, in this country, had dwelt at length on the altruistic effect on the human parents of the prolonged human infancy.

But this long period of dependence carries another consequence: it tends to encourage in the infant a deep-seated self-centeredness. He becomes accustomed to attention, and when it is not forthcoming he is likely to demand it. His normal imperative needs and desires are provided for by others, and necessarily so—and he finds that it is good! He is in danger of becoming a bit of incarnate egotism. The only universe he is capable of knowing gives every impression of existing for *him*. His nervous system and his emotional system bid fair to become organized with reference to what *he* wants. By the time he is able to make some distinction between himself and others, he is well established in self-regard. We might almost say that the maxim of his little life, his unconsciously adopted slogan, has become "I want, and I will have—regardless!" In

due time, that, unchecked, will appear as the very essence of sinfulness!

With the growth of the child's own will, however, there comes the power to make a discovery: it is the discovery of *other wills*. A child quickly learns that there are obstacles in the way of his physical movements. He finds himself hindered at this point and at that. He must either acquiesce in the opposition, or devise means of circumventing it. He must go over obstacles, or go around them, or push them aside. A physical object is something definite, tangible, coercive, and the child simply cannot ignore it, nor can he merely defy it. He must govern himself according to the reality of these hindering objects.

The discovery of other wills, however, comes later than the discovery of objects, and it is the discovery of something of a different nature. Indeed, speaking genetically, we may say that the discovery of objects and of ways of handling them is a preparation for the discovery of wills and for devices for meeting these wills. A will may, in a given case, manifest itself by some sort of physical pressure or compulsion, as when a parent or a companion forcibly hinders or compels activity. But in due time a will is made known through a gesture or a word or a look, and these have to be interpreted. The gesture, the word, the look, may convey a command, a wish, a permission, but it does not have the inherent coercive force of an object. It stands for something intangible, and it calls for a response more or less voluntary. But the child has already learned ways of meeting and circumventing objects, and this helps to determine his way of meeting—and circumventing!—wills. *His tendency is to "get his own way" if he can.* The will of the parent, expressed in a command, is simply a new kind of object which he must learn how to handle. In doing this he often displays an amazing ingenuity! The very necessity of meeting the new situation only serves to make him more aware of himself, more aware of what he wants, more aware of opposition, and more determined to get the better of it.

In the process of growing a person, however, still another factor comes into play. The process of developing awareness of things, a personal will, self-awareness, awareness of other wills, and a technique for meeting the various forms of opposition revealed in experience—this process is also the process of developing a *con-*

science. In the biological heritage are both the rudiments of a will and the rudiments of a mind and the rudiments of a conscience. All are developed through the social gestation. If only the first and second were to appear, and not the third, we should have a form of existence approximating the demonic. There could be no more effective instrument of sheer destructiveness than will and reason in complete separation from conscience.

In the growth of personality the social gestation necessarily takes place at a given cultural level—the cultural level of the child's time and place. Normally any social situation suffices for the development of a conscience, as it does for all the other features of personality. The "sense of the ought" may not be born with the infant, but he will in due time acquire it. The conditions of this acquisition are sheerly fateful. For he acquires more than the bare *form*, as was said above; he acquires also the standards according to which it functions. The behavior patterns which elicit the approval or disapproval of conscience vary according as the cultural heritage varies. The "right" of one time and place is often enough the "wrong" of another time and place.

When we put all this together, we see readily enough what is the genesis of sinfulness and sin in a given individual. It is the simple truth that *the very process of growing a person from an infant is the process of growing a rebel.* The things that must be to get a person in any proper sense are the very things that assure rebellion and disobedience and that adverse self-judgment which is the essence of guilt. That there will be a first sin is nothing less than inevitable. It will take the form of self-assertion against authority; in a word, it will be rebellion, and it will be rebellion because the whole process, biological, cultural, social, psychological, of producing a person is a process of producing *a rebellious nature.*

The problem thereafter becomes the problem of transforming the rebel into a loyalist. Such a transformation calls for an appealing cause, but not only for a cause that appeals, but also for a cause of such a character that it can justify itself from the standpoint of *its sheer worth for the whole life process*, individual and social. Such a cause inevitably calls for conflict. It is the conflict that characterizes the personal process from the very beginning. The process of producing a person is the process of producing a rebel before it can be also the process of producing a loyalist. Why?

Because the creativity which seeks perfected personality seeks it through conditions of opposition. *It is the counteractivity of the Adversary that assures the production of the rebel.* The Creator is compelled to a process whose concomitants of evil are not at all what he seeks, but he must accept them and use them as means to what he does seek. He does not "do evil that good may come," but he cannot seek and accomplish the good without making evil possible and even inevitable. This necessity is an attendant of the personal process just as truly as it is the attendant of all other processes. The Creator must reckon with this, and does, not to the point of being estopped in his purpose, but to the point of tragic suffering in its behalf.

Going back for a moment to Augustine and his Reformation followers, we find them, as we have said, operating with such concepts as original sin, inherited guilt, moral impotence, predestination, election, and reprobation. For the most part, they derived these concepts and their connotation from certain passages in the Scriptures, and they worked them into a system whose framework was determined in the main by the creation and fall *mythus* in Genesis. We can no longer use that *mythus* as traditional theology has used it. Whether or no, we must use rather the evolutionary *mythus*. But what at once impresses us as we attempt to do that is the fact that the new *mythus* still calls for many of the older concepts, except that we can now give them an intelligibility which they had begun to lose through their articulation with the old *mythus*. We no longer trace back to the specific will of God and to his eternal decrees and secret counsels what these concepts represent. We explain them rather by the necessities of the situation which emerges as God seeks to fulfill his purpose.

The situation assures evil, and one of the evils it assures is sin because it assures the appearance of rebels. The situation assures vast inequalities in human life. The situation assures that great numbers will die in ignorance of the grace of God. The situation assures that many will seem to be favored far beyond others—favored even in respect of opportunities for full and rich experience and for knowledge of the way of salvation.

We may, of course, still insist that whatever the character of the situation, it precisely expresses God's sovereign will. Or, declaring that the will of God because the character of God is to be read

in the light of the revelation in Christ, we may say that this makes it impossible to believe that whatever the given situation, God's will is there expressed. And this is what we shall say, being Christians for whom Christ is the all-determining standard. We shall say, we must say, that God has a purpose of grace respecting every man who was ever born, but that this purpose is subject to the contingencies of the creative conflict. The inequalities are inseparable from a situation whose law is the conflict of good and evil.

The one sure conviction to which we dare cling with uncompromising tenacity is that God desires and intends to bring his grace to bear upon every human soul. The grace may meet with final resistance: this is the logic of human freedom; but until the resistance actually is final and so irreversible, the grace will not desist from its seeking. God's self-disclosure in Christ carries the corollary that *the one inalienable human right is that every soul shall have equality of opportunity in respect of its final salvation.* Augustine and his followers denied that right. They based their denial on Scripture and its teaching concerning the sovereignty of God. But they mistook the principle of scriptural interpretation and consequently misinterpreted the divine sovereignty. The Christian norm is the mind of Christ, and all the dark facts of human life, including original sinfulness, and the certainty of deliberate sin, and the profound moral conflict in personality which these bespeak, are to be looked at and understood accordingly.

The *logic of the creative conflict* as it affects man is a rebellious "original" nature, mutuality in guilt, predestination, election, and reprobation. All this we can allow. But the logic of revelation with its climacteric in Christ profoundly modifies this naturalistic logic —for it is that. The *logic of revelation* is human salvability, the persistent grace of God, a Holy Spirit everywhere active in such ways as the given situation makes possible, the use of the privileged for the service of the less privileged, an increasing fellowship of man with God and of man with man, and set above it all, as the undeviating guiding star, the purpose of a final family of God from which none will be excluded save as he may choose to exclude himself. That this requires a long look into a vista of

> Worlds on worlds for ever rolling
> From creation to decay,

until there comes a world which passes not because God has become "all in all"—this is not to be denied. No Christian theology can be complete without an eschatology. This is so, and the New Testament tells us why. It is because "the Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." (II Pet. 3:9.)

Are, then, the two logical series recognized above actually contradictory? No, they are not contradictory because they inhere in the process of realization of one and the same purpose. The process of securing a man is a part of the process of securing a son of God. Creation issues in man not merely because the purpose of creation is to secure a living organism, but because the living organism—man—is intended for entry into conscious fellowship with God. Man considered biologically is man considered truly enough, but not man considered in his ultimate significance. Paul exactly stated the principle: "First . . . that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual." The subhuman forms of life are the scaffolding of the biological man, and in his turn the natural man is the scaffolding of, shall we say, the spiritual man. There must be man the animal before there can be man the son of God. Which works out to mean that the whole creation conspires together to make possible a creature capable of conscious fellowship with God, to support the process whereby such a creature realizes, or may realize, his possibility, and then to serve as the arena in which its requirements are carried out.

As we shall see below, the whole meaning of the Christian faith is in this process of transformation. Biological man may be accounted for in terms of a naturalistic and even necessitated evolutionism, but spiritual man may not be so accounted for. Other factors not heretofore present must become operative. There must be some new form of activity on the part of God, and there must be on the part of man a free and conscious response to this new divine activity. Any growth of any sort depends upon some relevance of factors in the growing organism and factors in the environment. To this extent each set of factors exists for the other set. What it belongs to man to be able to become calls for some form of reality other than man to which he can relate himself for the purpose. What we mean by Christian experience cannot be a

merely arbitrary creation on the part of God. The nature of the experience is determinative of the way in which it is produced. God produces human infants from nature in general, and he produces human persons from human infants, and there is something necessary about the process. The "laws" are ascertainable, and they operate without the consent of the organisms most affected.

Similarly, God from human persons produces sons of his love, we might even say Christian saints. But the process is not the same as in the other areas. The "law" of sonship is different from the "law" of creaturehood. New factors are at work. A human infant becomes a human infant whether or no, and a human person becomes a human person whether or no, but a son of God, a Christian saint, does not become a son of God, a Christian saint, whether or no. He has his own part to play in it, but God has a part to play in it as well. Creativity must move to a higher level in order to get a higher result.

And this is what it actually does. God, who is himself creativity, enters the arena of his own creation by the activity of the Holy Spirit and specifically by Jesus Christ. In doing this he creates those conditions, response to which, and co-operation with which, on the part of man give rise to the process whereby out of necessarily produced rebellious persons arise freely produced sons—free in the sense that they know what they are doing and desire to do it. Hence the great word: "As many as received him, to them gave he power [the right] to become [to come to be] children of God." (John 1:12.)

There is therefore no actual dichotomy of the total process. What we have called the logic of creation and the logic of redemption are ultimately one logic because they attend the activity of one and the same God working out his purpose in such conditions as he must face. These conditions, as we have said, are full of difficulties, as much for God as for ourselves. The same Adversary who would frustrate the creative process would frustrate the redemptive process. The interference of evil is not limited to any one place; only, in personal life it seeks and gains a co-operation which, just because it is willing, constitutes sin. But it still remains that the ways of nature and the ways of grace are the ways of the same God, irrespective of what interference may do with them. The divine creativity which seems to issue, and does in fact issue,

in such a vast range of inequalities among men, is the same creativity which continues to be operative, but now with healing and transforming and redeeming power, in the ministries of the Holy Spirit and supremely in and through Jesus Christ.

This is the truth which is expressed so concisely in the Fourth Gospel: that actuality in the very nature of God by which he creates is the same actuality in God by which he redeems—that is, by which he brings to completion, or would bring to completion, what he has begun. The creative "Word" and the redemptive "Word" are not two, but one. There is one eternal purpose of God, and all his activity, under whatever conditions, and through whatever difficulties and oppositions, is determined relative to that opposition. The Hebrew conception of God as Yahweh, meaning the dependable one, undeviating in the pursuit of his purpose, the God who having made a covenant may be relied upon to keep it, no matter what the cost, is a conception which in the Christian faith is both presupposed and most dramatically confirmed.

That form of the traditional theology, therefore, stemming out from Augustine and becoming strongly entrenched in wide areas of Protestantism, which put a limit on the range of divine grace, so that only "chosen" souls may be brought to sonship, while all others are left to follow the natural course of rebellious creaturehood—that form of the traditional theology leaves the creative movement incomplete and therefore meaningless in one great area of it. *The whole area of the helplessly reprobate is the area of the incomplete.* The incomplete is a sad possibility, but an incomplete in spite of God's will to have it otherwise is very different in its sheer moral significance from the incomplete which could not have been otherwise because God willed the incompleteness.

The incomplete—meaning the human person who was forever barred from sonship because provision for his sonship was never made—involves a logic which is not congruous with the logic of revelation and redemption. It is one thing for creativity to waste a thousand seeds to make sure that one will survive and fructify, or to expend the subhuman in incalculable quantities to make sure that there will be a human species. In such cases the lesser is sacrificed for the greater. But it is a quite different thing to condemn countless human souls to eternal loss for the sake of a few who are chosen to eternal bliss. Here it is not a question of sacrificing the

lesser for the greater since, in any adequate Christian view, all souls are of equal value and significance. I have no right to expect that others are to be lost that I might be saved, and I cannot imagine myself accepting salvation on those conditions! There was a truly Christian quality in the prayer of Moses for the people of Israel after the sin of the golden calf: "And Moses returned unto Jehovah, and said, Oh, this people have sinned a great sin, and have made them gods of gold. Yet now, if now wilt forgive their sin—and if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book which thou hast written." (Exod. 32:31-32, A.S.V.)

We shall stress, no less than did Augustine and Calvin, the glory of God. We shall allow for the possibility of souls missing the way. We shall allow even for the element of mystery in the fact that some respond to the appeal of divine grace in conditions which seem identical with the conditions of those who do not respond. We shall allow that the grace of God cannot be schematized. But we shall nevertheless hold that nothing can bespeak the glory of God like redeemed souls. The logic of revelation is that all souls are born to be saved. The glory of God is bespoken in the fact of man's existence, since it is only through great tribulation that the divine creativity secures a man. The glory of God is much more fully bespoken when man the rebellious creature becomes man the obedient son, and it is the more fully bespoken because of what God himself must do to secure sons.

The rebellious creature who does not become the obedient son remains so far forth incomplete; that is to say, the whole creative process of which he is the issue has failed of "arrival." If the failure is due to continued and willful and final rebelliousness, there is still incompleteness, but the incompleteness is not of God's will. *God would have had it otherwise.* The glory of God in that case is in the permanent hurt which is God's because of the frustration of his redemptive will.

That frustration, indeed, assuming its actuality, means that some touch of evil will remain even in the final universe, a touch of evil that is the mute testimony to the cost of the entire creative and redemptive process. But a resisted grace is a very different thing from a nonextended grace. A nonextended grace, with its corollary of nonsalvable because nonchosen souls, means God's deliberate limitation on his own glory, since on any showing the

saved glorify God as the lost never can. But the one thing that the Christ-revelation means is that God sets no limitation to his purpose of grace. There are limitations in its operation because its operation is conditioned by time and place and means: God must find "channels" of his grace, and men are among these channels, and oftentimes even his own alleged servants may prove to be blocked channels. But the purpose always holds, the purpose to find an approach to every human soul. The approach may be long-delayed, and when found may still be resisted, but if that should happen, the limitations hence arising on both God's grace and God's glory will arise not of God's will but of his necessity.

"God our Saviour . . . would have all men to be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, one mediator also between God and men, himself man, Christ Jesus, who gave himself a ransom for all; the testimony to be borne in its own times." (I Tim. 2:3-6, A.S.V.) That phrase, "*the testimony to be borne in its own times*," is overwhelming in its sheer suggestiveness. There are countless souls to whom the testimony has never yet been borne, and in this life now never can be. But it still waits to be borne, and God waits for those who will bear it. The ultimate logic of revelation is therefore *testimony*, which is to say evangelism, missions, "the passion for souls." Those who come first to the knowledge of God's grace come for the sake of those who are yet to come. There are still the "elect," but there is a burden upon the elect: they are to go out into the highways and hedges to search for the "reprobate," that from the reprobate may be increased the number of the elect!

Chapter XVIII. THE POWER TO BECOME SONS

Personality continues to move toward maturity in agreement with the genetic principles which have now been stated and briefly described. There is always a heritage at work. There is always an inner process taking place. There is always some sort of reciprocity between the heritage and the process. The total personality at any given time is the issue of this reciprocity. Not a purely passive issue, because the person will have his own part to play in the inner process, and because he will take up an attitude toward the heritage, in part approving it, in part repudiating it. But he cannot halt the reciprocal movement itself. While he is making himself what he is, he is always being made what he is. It is through this movement that creativity is at work seeking its goal, and it is through this same movement that discreativity is equally at work seeking to frustrate the creative. The personal heritage and the personal process in their reciprocal relations are the battlefield in which the ancient conflict of good and evil is continued. And the stake is human souls.

The things that may happen to a man through his heritage and his involution with it are more than can be described. In that aspect of his life he is purely passive. But a man is very much more than the sum of what happens *to* him. We have also to consider what is done *by* him, and what this activity reveals about the man himself. The very factors because of which he can be passive are the factors because of which he can be active. If he can be molded, he can also mold—mold himself. He is not only *contending with* good and evil, driven to make decisions; he is also being *contended for* by good and evil. He is the common point of interest for the Creator and the Adversary alike. In his social history the seven virtues and the seven vices are equally commingled, and they seek a place in his personal history as well. Both are the fruitage of what enters into a man to make him.

The stuff of vice and the stuff of virtue dwell alike in human

nature. Sensuality, murder, license, gluttony, drunkenness, bestiality, greed, oppression, tyranny, treachery, robbery—these are forms of human activity. They are the blossomings of the heritage in relation with the personal process. A man is constituted with reference to their possibility, just as surely as he is constituted with reference to those moral qualities which are their opposites. They are the denials of the *purpose* of creativity, but it is that purpose which makes them possible. They are tares rather than good grain, but the tares and the good grain grow in the same field, and the field is the human heart. The kingdom of good exists side by side with the kingdom of evil.

A maturing person is subject to a wide variety of emergent situations. He is incessantly aware of much that is being borne in upon him from without. He is no less aware of a wide variety of possible considerations which arise before him, unsolicited, from within. This changing awareness is of a piece with his very constitution. It is impossible for him to achieve a complete isolation or a complete neutrality or a complete indifference. There may be abnormal cases of lethargy so nearly absolute that nothing seems able to disturb it; but we are not talking about the abnormal. We are talking about the ordinary course of the ordinary experience of ordinary persons. In such experience there are *voices that make themselves heard*. There are beseeching voices, and imperative voices, and threatening voices, and seductive voices, and austere voices. It belongs to a man to hear these voices. Something wants him, and this is how it is trying to get him. The voices which are heeded will be the voices of destiny.

A person does not heed all the voices all at once. He may heed now one, and now the other; he may ignore now one, and now the other. This means that he is not wholly at their mercy. By virtue of the law of habit it is possible for him to become automatically responsive to some of the voices. How easy it is to do this need not be said. It becomes the more difficult to change a response the more often it is made. The chains that bind us and the wings that make us free are the precipitate of decisions repeated until they are habitual. Everything indicates that the time may come when it shall have ceased to be possible for wings to be exchanged for chains or for chains to be exchanged for wings. But before that time comes, the soul retains a measure of selectivity, and ac-

cording to its selection from the changing confrontation much else will be determined foever.

Life is made up of innumerable little decisions, but the numerous lesser decisions are the issue of the much rarer crucial decisions. Usually the crucial decision results from a special *augmentation* of some element in the confrontation. The element may have been met a countless number of times before. But suddenly it takes on a new significance. The familiar wears a new face. The accustomed carries an unwonted appeal. Something that had been heard from childhood is heard as though for the first time. This involves, so to speak, an inner shift. The evidence of the augmentation of the appeal is in the fact of the response. The augmentation may, indeed, arise from within in the first place. Some new mood, some new desire, some new purpose, already active in the person's soul, may invest an element in the person's situation with a significance it never had before. Or the movement may be in the other direction—from without in. The objective confrontation—the emerging situation—may be such as to arrest attention and demand consideration. But the choice, the endorsement, the commitment—always these must come from within, the man's true act, and therefore the man's true measure. Conversion is the personal process redirected by the introduction of new convictions, new motives, new purposes, new relationships. But the framework within which this takes place is already established in the necessities of human nature itself. The "new man" is the "old man" made at home in a new situation.

This new situation, and what it makes possible, is not to be separated from all that is meant by revelation. The human problem is not humanly soluble, even though it is not soluble apart from human responsiveness. No man can save himself, and no man can be saved in spite of himself. That necessity which called for the Creator's personal participation in the creative conflict, if creation was to eventuate in redemption, has its analogy in individual experience. If the terms may be employed, the objective revelation must become subjectively operative if the purpose of the objective is to be fulfilled. It is not enough that God speak and act in the general historic movement. He must speak and act in the individual soul, and this more specific speaking and acting on God's part is but the application and appropriation *at the point of the particular*

soul of the more general speaking and acting. In a word, it is as the soul enters into personal relationship with God as God has already revealed himself to be that the soul finds its true deliverance.

This is simply to say that the radical change involved in a Christian conversion, that is, in making out of mere creatures of God's power the sons of his love, is not explicable in terms of a purely naturalistic psychology. A factor is involved that is more-than-natural. One of the most successful efforts to ascertain and describe the psychological process is that of W. E. Hocking in *Human Nature and Its Remaking*. Yet Hocking confessedly could not complete the analysis on a purely naturalistic basis. He eventually recognized the necessity of what he called "the divine aggression." He frankly admits the distaste to man's moral independence of "salvation from outside," while yet he insists that the whole history of religion is a confirmation of man's needing what he would fain avoid. An alleged human self-sufficiency has collapsed in the face of the actualities of experience: the help of the divine has been sought to do for the human what the human could not do for itself. The truth of the situation is expressed in the simple declaration that "the salvation of a soul requires a divine intervention." All the metaphors, often enough crude and repulsive, that have to do with the idea of a divine sacrifice on behalf of men, are so much evidence of the hold of this requirement on mankind. We meet it in Christianity in the conception of a Mediator, especially as it is set forth in the Epistle to the Hebrews:

> For if the blood of goats and bulls, and the ashes of a heifer . . . sanctify unto the cleanness of the flesh: how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish unto God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? And for this cause he is the mediator of a new covenant, that a death having taken place for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first covenant, they that have been called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance. . . . Apart from shedding of blood there is no remission. . . . For Christ entered not into a holy place made with hands, like in pattern to the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear before the face of God for us. . . . Now once at the end of the ages hath he been manifested to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. (9:13-15, 22, 24, 26, A.S.V.)

All the New Testament teaching about "being made righteous by faith" is inseparably connected with this self-giving of Christ.

Human salvation is from beyond the human. The "new life" is "life hidden with Christ in God." It is by participation in Christ that the soul participates in that in which also God participated for the sake of men. "For there is one God, one mediator also between God and men, himself man, Christ Jesus, who gave himself a ransom for all." The ground of human salvation is laid outside of man in the sacrificial entry of God into human life through his eternal Son. The sacrifice of God looks to the deliverance of men from bondage to evil, but the deliverance is accomplished only as men make the sacrifice their own. What God in Christ did *for me* I must accept as done *for me* before it can become actually effective *for me*.

All this presupposes certain possibilities which go with human nature. These are respectively salvability, conviction, penitence, faith, and vicariousness. We consider each of these in turn.

In the first place, man is a rebellious creature to whom it belongs to be able to become an obedient son of God. This is what is meant by *salvability*. No human being is born saved: it would be truer to say that he is born lost, although such a statement would require careful explanation. He is certainly born with a complex of qualities which, if they mature solely according to the law of the human, will never find their true correlation.

A realized relation to what can only be called the supernatural is an essential condition to "the natural man" arriving at the stature of the spiritual man. The inherent contradiction of the human cannot be resolved on the level which creates the contradiction. The contradiction arises from the duality in which human nature is necessarily constituted. Human nature was grown in the arena of animal life, but is is more than animality because it is stamped with the image of the creative power as mere animality can never be. More went into the making of the human "kind" than went into the making of any other "kind." The measure of the human is therefore never to be found in the less-than-human, but only in that more-than-human which is prognosticated in the most distinctive human qualities. God is not to be derived from man, and neither is man to be understood apart from God. In man's alleged biological ancestry there is not enough to account for what man knows he is. He is more than the sum of all his ascertainable parts.

It is this "plus" which is the occasion of his restlessness, his

conflicts, his despairs, his aspirations. In his possession of it is the reason why he may be lost, and in his possession of it is the reason why he may be saved. Herein is the basis of his mutuality with the divine. Herein is his vulnerability to the assaults of the Adversary. There is no proper sense in which life below the level of the human may be either lost or saved. When creativity reached the level of the human it reached the level of destiny. Man's destiny is set by man's nature, and his nature contains an indestructible "either-or." Hedged about as he is by all manner of necessitatedness, he yet may choose his ultimate determinants. By what he consents to be determined, by that he consents to his own moral status. His justification or his condemnation is in his "would-be," since it belongs to the "would-be," no matter what its character, to become, by the sheer logic of the personal process, the "is." The spirit's willingness may be hampered by the weakness of the flesh; but it is the willing spirit, not the weak flesh, which is the core around which the new life of obedient sonship and sacrificial brotherhood slowly but securely grows.

All Christian experience and all Christian living rests back upon the fact that this is the way a man is made. He is the issue of vast conflict, and the marks of the conflict are upon him to divide him against himself, but this very self-division looks to a unitary goal. He is made *this way* to become *that way*. He is made a rebel to become a son, and he could not become a son otherwise. The son is the rebel who has changed sides. He who once fought against creative love now fights for it. He is destroyed or redeemed, bound or set free, according to his *cause*.

A man does not, however, change sides without a reason. This is why, in the second place, we must emphasize *conviction*. Convictability is presupposed in salvability. It belongs to a man to be able to look at himself over against a standard, and to judge himself accordingly. This self-estimate may proceed without any particular reference to conscience and profound inner disturbance, but conscience would be meaningless without it. Conscience means that a man can look at himself and pronounce himself sinful. But no man could do that if all he could see was himself. It is what he sees that is not himself that leads him to pronounce upon himself. No judgment is possible except as there is an apprehended standard

of judgment. This is true of human experience in any of its aspects; much more is it true of human experience in its moral aspect.

What was described above as "confrontation" and "augmentation" is indispensable to conviction, in particular to conviction of sin. Something must be brought before the mind in suchwise that it is seen to be authoritative. There is intrinsic authority and there is imputed authority, but intrinsic authority can never become such for a given person save by way of imputation. This imputation must be made by the person who is confronted. No authority can arrest attention save as its authoritativeness is recognized. It is when a man is confronted by an idea or a fact or a demand to which he finds he cannot but respond by an admission, "This is it"—it is then that he makes a self-judgment. In such a situation the self-judgment is inevitable. If the self-judgment does not follow the admission, it is because the admission was not sincerely made. It was a mere conventionality, and no man was ever yet profoundly disturbed by making a merely conventional assent to any truth, no matter what its character.

It is not too much to say that the purpose of all Christian testimony is to confront the worldly-minded with truth that has the power to disturb complacency and indifference and to induce self-judgment. "For seeing that in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom knew not God, it was God's good pleasure through the foolishness of the preaching [both the act of preaching and the truth preached] to save them that believe." (I Cor. 1:21, A.S.V.) In one sense all Christian testimony, all Christian living, all Christian service, is preaching. It is the proclamation of a truth. It is confronting darkness with light. It is an attempt to compel attention. Its purpose, certainly a large part of its purpose, is to witness to God in a world which, in many of its aspects, seems to deny him. Nowhere is God indubitably affirmed save in this witness and in the revelation the acceptance of which evokes the testimony. Everything elsewhere, even conscience itself, which may seem to be an intimation of the divine, waits upon this witnessing for its final authentication.

There are various kinds and degrees of conviction, conviction of personal failure, conviction of personal unworthiness, but conviction of sin in any profound and searching sense is a response to some clear ringing and irresistible witness to God. Chris-

tian failure in respect of uncompromising Christian witnessing is one of the most fruitful causes of the world's moral lethargy. Conviction of sin will never take place unless a voice in some form can reach the soul of the careless and unconcerned and compel its attention. The familiar line in Lowell's *Commemoration Ode* is pregnant with meaning: "What men call treasure and the Gods call dross." Conviction of sin always calls for this "transvaluation of values." It involves that what was first changed places with what was not first. That exchange can never take place save under the drive of some great dynamic. Much of the problem of human redemption is the problem of engendering this "drive." Men will not go in the direction toward which they do not look. How to make them look—that is the question. For of looking comes conviction, and of conviction comes desire, and of desire comes action.

In the third place, there is no deliverance without *penitence.* The cleansing and healing and releasing power of penitence is very great. Penitence is at once self-acceptance and self-repudiation. The soul accepts as its own all its intrinsic and accumulated evil, and at the same time repudiates it. The last thing that occurs to a truly penitent soul to do is to attempt self-excuse. Self-excuse means that the penitence is superficial. This is strikingly illustrated in the story of Aaron and the golden calf. The calf, said Aaron to Moses, was a purely unintended result of his throwing the people's jewelry into the fire! The dancing and revelry which followed on the people observing this strange result was likewise unintended. In a word, the defection of Aaron and the people was not to be judged too severely because it had not arisen of set purpose.

The actual situation was far otherwise, as the narrative itself makes plain (Exod. 32:1-24). The defection was deliberate and calculated, and it called for the sternest measures on the part of Moses to bring the people to penitent mood (32:25-35; 33:1-6). In "The New Sinai" Arthur Hugh Clough has interpreted the incident perfectly, and given it its proper application. He describes the defiant mood which settled upon the people when Moses did not return, and the abandon with which even Aaron, the priest, exhorted them to worship "the gilded beast." But that "priestly creed" was anything but what it ought to have been. It was something, says Clough, to "reject as sin." And then the appeal:

The clouded hill attend thou still,
And him that went within.
He yet shall bring some worthy thing
For waiting souls to see:
Some sacred word that he hath heard
Their light and life shall be;
Some lofty part, than which the heart
Adopt no nobler can,
Thou shalt receive, thou shalt believe
And thou shalt do, O Man!

That is it! The rejection as sin of that to which life had been committed. And rejected on what ground? On the ground that within the concealing cloud was that divine reality to which it was the office of Moses to bear unflinching testimony. "These be thy gods!" cried the deluded priest and people—these visibilities, these unmistakable things of sense, these ecstatic abandonments, these fleshly sights and sounds! *And they would have had it so but for one man*, the man who had come from communing with God, the man who knew what the cloud concealed. In his holy wrath that one man exhibited before them the reality of God. In his anger they saw the folly of their folly, the sinfulness of their sin, the futility of their pretenses, the unerring exactitude of divine judgment. Whatever degree of penitence the people came to, they came to it because God had been made real to them in the speech and action of living witness. Confrontation indeed!

As already said, penitence means both self-acceptance and self-repudiation. A man faces all his sin and sinfulness, and says "Mine!" And as he continues to face it, he says also, "Not mine!" Conviction would mean nothing but despair if the convicted could not be carried to the point of penitence. There cannot be the repudiation of sinfulness until there has been the acceptance, and it is the function of conviction to promote this acceptance. But the acceptance is never for the sake of the acceptance: rather, it is for the sake of the repudiation. A principle of immense significance is involved here—*the principle of shifted responsibility*. It will be considered more fully later, but it first appears in connection with penitence. In the man's very acceptance of the responsibility for his sin, a process has been begun which will eventuate in his being released from it. He can never be forgiven until he has shown by

his penitence that he first lays the burden of his sin upon himself alone. Who so helpless as the self-confessed sinner—and who so ready to be helped? God can do nothing for any soul until it has broken down under the felt weight of its own sinfulness.

And even that can never happen save as God can find the means of confronting the sinful soul with itself. God must have witnesses if he is to free human souls from the bondage of the Adversary. This may be taken as a commonplace observation; but it is still the simple truth that God never yet delivered one soul from its chains save through the witness, direct or indirect, of another. The moral tragedy of many a life is in the fact that at the crucial moments there was not present, in the range of its varied confrontation, an arresting and authentic testimony. Many a rebel soul has continued in its rebelliousness because others who supposed they were obedient sons of God were complacent where they should have been concerned, indifferent where they should have been agitated, silent where they should have been prophetically audible.

In the fourth place, the process of deliverance calls for *faith*. The Christian gospel carries the assurance that sin need no longer be a barrier between the soul and God; faith accepts the assurance and acts accordingly. But it is not mere faith: actually, *mere* faith is impossible. Faith is really faith only as it has a definite direction, a definite point of attachment. The faith of which comes deliverance is faith *in Christ*. Faith in Christ, however, involves a prior conviction about him. Some measure of intellection is absolutely indispensable to faith. Critics of Luther are apt to say that he reduced faith to simple assent to a proposition. This is very far from being a fair criticism of Luther. But if what it means is that Luther held that "belief about" is requisite to "faith in," then it is difficult to see any point in the criticism. How could faith be either intelligible or defensible unless it sprang from a conviction of worthiness respecting that person toward whom faith is directed?

Is Christ worthy of our faith? That, surely, is the question of questions. Do we see in him God's supreme self-disclosure? Was this self-disclosure made for the one purpose of delivering men from sin and assuring them victory over evil? Was Christ the final meeting place of the divine and the human? Was the Cross the personal submission of God the Son to the utmost evil that the Adversary could inflict? Was the Resurrection the evidence that

the Adversary's last weapon, death, was not enough, since the Creator had power even over death? Was the Christ who was born of men, and lived as a man, and died on the cross, and was raised from the dead, so really the eternal Son of the eternal Father, that in all he did on behalf of men he acted for God, and therefore it was God doing it?

We cannot ignore such questions when we consider the New Testament teaching that *God regards as a righteous man the man who has faith in Christ.* Human salvability presupposes the eternal Christ who in the fullness of time would offer himself as a sacrifice for the sins of the world. Men were not salvable otherwise, which means that they would not have been created. They were created in Christ because they were to be redeemed through Christ. Conviction of sin is not complete save as the sinfulness is seen in the light of Christ. Penitence is not complete save as it is penitence induced by confrontation with Christ. Faith is not the faith that destroys the barrier to divine-human fellowship save as it is faith in Christ as the sin-bearer. The phrase "saving faith" has been sadly enough abused; it is nevertheless true that faith in Christ as actually "crucified for me" is the only way whereby a sinful man can be reconciled to God. He cannot be reconciled by anything he can himself do. He cannot wipe out the past. He cannot change his history. He cannot make anything as though it had not been. Only God can do that, and in Christ God declares that he will do this on the one condition of *faith that this is what Christ is for.*

This does not mean that faith has no further significance, or that there is no further demand on the Christian man. The experience of personal reconciliation with God at once sets the reconciled soul against evil in all of its forms. More will be said about this in the next chapter. It must suffice here to stress the far-reaching moral and social implicates of faith in Christ. There is no more heavily obligated man in the world than the sincere Christian. He is no longer his own, but another's, and he has been bought with a price. To have been redeemed by Christ is to bear the marks of Christ, and to bear the marks of Christ is to be among men as one who serves. The service is not the cause of the reconciliation, but is the fruit of it. The want of the fruit will bespeak the want of the root.

In the fifth place, the process of transforming the rebel into a son calls for *a new personal center.* This is the crucial consider-

ation, and it involves the basic principle of *vicariousness*. For all that has been said so far presupposes a duality in human nature. This duality appears with the dawning of personal life, and it provides the basis of moral conflict. There could be no such conflict if the life were entirely unitary.

Every man is two men; at least, he is the subject of two contrary laws. Paul speaks representatively when he says: "With the mind I . . . serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin." (Rom. 7:25.) There are two "laws," but the same "I" is the subject of both. Neither law could operate without some consent from the center, but it is always possible that consent may be accompanied by protest.

The question therefore arises: "Which is the man's true measure, the protest or the consent?" If in the same situation I both would and would not, then what am I? I am obviously a battlefield, and I am obviously for and against the same cause. I can only conclude that I am under a greater constraint than as a mere isolated individual I can account for. I am an instrument of overindividual powers. I am being besought to become more than a mere individual, either as good or as evil; I am being besought to identify myself, not partially but wholly, with one or the other of these overindividual realities. In the degree of that identity is the actuality of my moral status.

"The good that I would, I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. . . . When I would do good, evil is present with me." Paul's confession has universal validity. The "would" or the "would not" is, however, still significant. It is the direction toward which I set my face, not the direction in which I am driven by uncontrollable and unpredictable forces, that is the promise of my ultimate arrival, provided always that I sincerely seek to go whither I look. Just to resolve and never to do is not really to resolve. Dante Gabriel Rossetti has said this for us in "Soothsay":

> Unto the man of yearning thought
> And aspiration, to do nought
> Is in itself almost an act,—
> Being chasm-fire and cataract
> Of the soul's utter depths unsealed.
> Yet woe to thee if once thou yield
> Unto the act of doing nought!

To "aim at a hundred and miss even one" is justifiable in a novice; it is not permanently justifiable. My real haven is the haven where I fain would be, not the haven to which I find myself being driven under the violence of a raging gale; nevertheless, my *purpose* must be to reach the desired haven. In my struggle I may be defeated, yet my defeat is not complete if I fought as a man should. The youth of whom Tennyson wrote in "Locksley Hall" wavered between the call of the high and the lure of the low, but it was the high that eventually claimed him, to the sanctifying of his hesitation:

> O, I see the crescent promise of my spirit hath not set.
> Ancient founts of inspiration well thro' all my fancy yet.

If there be still that in me which reaches out toward the good, in that outreaching is my hope—an anchor of the soul with a grip in the hidden future. Not only is there something working redeemingly within me, but I am working together with it: otherwise it could not work.

> Incentives come from the soul's self;
> The rest avail not.

Augustine only went a little deeper into the problem of the origin of incentives when he said that it is prevenient grace that originates operative grace as this, in turn, originates co-operative grace.

Two men! An evil and a good! "O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from this body of death, from this entail of the past, from this residue of the vast creative conflict, from this divisiveness which has been laid upon me by the very gift of life itself?" I cannot save myself, and I cannot be saved without myself. Grace and faith must here combine to make out of two men one man. Whose grace? God's. Whose faith? Mine. Yet mine only because God bestows it as a gift through the silent and inscrutable ministry of the Holy Spirit. The inner shifting that organizes the divided life around a new center has its dynamic in grace and faith, but neither grace nor faith can be brought under the category of arbitrary compulsion. Irresistibility, even of divine grace, within the realm of the personal can never be absolute, since it is conditioned on the very nature of the personal, and the

personal must consent to its own modification, and especially to its own subjection to a single control.

This "two-man" dualism is forced by demonic evil, and is, indeed, one of the dramatic evidences of how real this evil is. The Creator never wanted a divided man: he accepted him as inevitable. In that dire necessity, however, divine creativity establishes the strategy of victory. For there belongs to every man, as necessary concomitant of his power to be more than a mere instrument and to be an agent in his own right, a capacity of inner transference. Every self has its own "other-self," and it is good or evil, as the case may be. The hope of any man's ultimate deliverance from sin and evil is in the fact that, as was shown above, he may accept the responsibility for the sinful "other-self" and at the same time declare of it, "Not I." This is the very essence of penitence, and is the reason why the penitential mood must continue until that day when sanctity is complete. For when sanctity is complete, the sinful "other-self" is dead and the duality is ended. Every man is tied to his total self, and he can never escape from it: he can only seek such a relation to God as will assure the coming of the time when his total self is also his true self.

The principle involved in this inner transference, and alone making it possible, is no mere accident of the creative process. From a purely rational standpoint it may, perhaps, be regarded as accidental. But not from the standpoint of faith. From the standpoint of faith, that in man which bespeaks the certainty of his downfall through the machinations of demonic evil never quite escapes from the subtle control of creative love. If "natural depravity" had been as "total" as much Christian tradition has made it out to be, then man would be utterly nonsalvable because utterly unable to take sides. Only a soul that can take sides can be either lost or saved. The power of side-taking is intrinsic in the human person as naturally constituted: herein, indeed, is his duality. Discreativity set itself to destroy, but creativity set itself to love, and both procedures focus in man. The creative conflict, the emerging human situation, the emerging moral strategy—these are all of a piece, the three strands of a single cord.

The fulfillment of the creative purpose, however, can come only through grace, which implies that grace has been both the motive of the purpose and its dynamic. The conflict has proceeded

with reference to that final act of grace which, for faith, is the personal participation of the divine in the conflict. The presupposition of grace as effective is the human capacity to respond to it. This capacity of response is elemental in human nature: it is already predicted in the natural endowment of conscience and self-judgment. Without it there could be no moral experience, even no moral character. The duality which bespeaks the demonic bespeaks no less the divine. Mortability and salvability are the concave and the convex of the same arc.

Duality can engender moral conflict just because the human subject can be aware of his own division. He knows that a tug of war is taking place within him. In that very awareness a side-taking is indicated; he will be for or against something in himself. A side-taking is a declaration of intention. A declaration of intention at one point is a repudiation at another point. In that repudiation is a self-imputation of guilt: the repudiating self imputes to itself the guilt of the "other-self." *Such an imputation is an act of vicarious substitution.* To use the term, the guiltless self makes atonement for the guilty "other-self." It is as though a man should say: "The self that I am now is not the self that did those evil things, but I nevertheless assume the guilt of them. I confess them. I repent for them. I pray to be forgiven for them. I bear them before the holy God. I accept their consequences. Only at one point do I ask that their result be lifted from me. I ask that they no longer come between me and God, and I ask this because in humble faith I indentify myself with Christ the sin-bearer. I ask that for his sake I be treated as a righteous man, between whom and God no barrier of sin exists."

In other words, I assume the guilt of my "sinful other" and Christ bears it away. But how can this be? It can be because I can not only make myself one with my "sinful other" and take upon me his guilt, but because I can also make myself one with Christ in that Act whereby he took upon himself and bore away the sins of the world. When God looks at me in my penitence he sees a man who assumes the guilt whose cause he repudiates. But he sees more than that. He sees also a man who believes that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. He sees a man who knows he has no hope save in the forgiving grace of God, and a man who believes that that grace was supremely manifest in the sacrifice

of Christ in putting himself under the burden of man's sin, the just giving himself for the unjust that he might bring the unjust to God. When God sees such a man he sees a man such as he envisaged before ever the morning stars sang together for joy. He sees no longer a sinful and rebellious creature but a willing and obedient son.

Paul has stated the great truth for us in his own realistic way:

> For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: and that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again. . . . Wherefore if any man is in Christ, he is a new creature: the old things are passed away; behold, they are become new. But all things are of God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and gave unto us the ministry of reconciliation, . . . that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not reckoning unto them their trespasses. (II Cor. 5:14-15, 17-19, A.S.V.)

From the standpoint of the divine creative purpose, always must the Son of God give himself for the race of sinful men, since in no other way can the Adversary be overcome than by the Son of God making the sinful race his "other," voluntarily identifying himself with it to rescue and redeem it. From the standpoint of the human necessity born of the human predicament as caught between creativity and discreativity, always must the convicted and penitent sinful individual assume the guilt of his repudiated "other-self." But if he stops there, he is crushed by the burden he assumes: his penitence avails him nothing, for no penitence can destroy guilt. *The very meaning of Christ is that he need not stop there.* It belongs to the penitent to have faith, and faith takes him "into Christ" in the great act of atonement. In that self-identification of the penitent with the crucified Christ, the moral conflict that was otherwise so hopeless is transformed into an exhibition of divine grace. The Creator lays himself on the altar of sacrifice as the one only way whereby the Adversary may be defeated, and the rebellious creature be given the right and the power to become a son.

Chapter XIX. THE CHURCH MILITANT

THE EARLY FATHERS WERE FOND OF SAYING THAT "THE CHURCH is the extension of the Incarnation." As a rule, those who said it were themselves sacramentarians. They saw the Church as the depository of grace, the sacraments as the channels of grace, and the ministry as empowered to determine who should or who should not be the recipients of grace. While, under pressure, they would admit a distinction between the real Church and the apparent Church, the distinction was given no great practical significance. The tendency more and more was to identify the Church with the organization, and to regard as valid only that organization that was episcopally governed and approved.

The shameful treatment of bodies alleged to be heretical was but a logical result of this conception. One has but to mention the cases of the Montanists, who held that the activity of the Holy Spirit was not to be limited to the prescribed channels, and the Donatists, who claimed the right to choose their own bishop, to be made to realize how dangerous is the claim that the operations of the grace of God are to be determined by the judgments of men. "He giveth not the Spirit by measure" ought to have been taken to mean that God is much more concerned with effecting radical changes in human lives than he is with the methods which may be employed for this purpose. When the Church is so organized and so committed to hierarchical prerogatives that it can make no place for men and women of unmistakably Christlike character, while at the same time it holds in high honor and invests with the most august privileges men whose lives are a perpetual denial of Christ, it ought to be apparent that the Church has somewhere missed its way.

Instead of saying, therefore, that the Church is the extension of the Incarnation, we would rather say that the extension of the Incarnation constitutes the Church. On any showing, John Wycliffe was a more devoted Christian than the monks who dug up

his body and burned it, and scattered the ashes on the waters to the accompaniment of their maledictions. The Church of the sixteenth century had a place of honor for the monk Tetzel, who publicly sold indulgences as a country auctioneer sells bric-a-brac, and who piously turned over the proceeds to Rome for the greater glory of God in the completion of St. Peter's; it had no place for Martin Luther who protested against the blasphemy and numerous other evils, and who could have been held to the Church had the Church been brave enough to abolish these evils. Instead the Church retained the evils and excommunicated and outlawed Luther! Roman Catholic apologists still pronounce their fervent curses upon Luther for having "divided Christendom." One would suppose that they could be better employed in cleansing their side of Christendom from the evils which were the real cause of the division and which are likely to perpetuate it!

This is not to say that organization is not important and even indispensable, nor is it so say that division is not to be deplored. But "visible unity" is anything but the prime desideratum. The much-vaunted "age of faith," whose crown was the thirteenth century, was far from being a utopia. The student who is familiar with contemporary documents descriptive of human life in the medieval period will not be deceived by the fact that it was the period when the great orders were founded, many great monasteries built, and cathedrals of impressive grandeur erected in western Europe. The compilation of these documents by the accomplished medievalist G. G. Coulton provides an effective reply to those who suppose that a "reunited Church" contains the answer to the world's ills. If conditions were so rosy in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, what made necessary the reforming movement of Peter Waldo; and if the Church of that time was so possessed of the spirit of Christ, how are the incredibly diabolical persecutions of the Waldenses—who asked for nothing more than to be allowed to read the Bible and follow Christ as they believed they should—to be accounted for?

It is not division in respect of church government and procedures that is chiefly deplorable; this may even have a certain strategic value. What is deplorable is *the divisive spirit* which prevents the various divisions from working together as they should for the one purpose of seeking to make Christ supreme in the life of the

world. In a very real sense the true Church *is* "one Church." Organization, government, procedures, name—these are secondary. What is primary is life, spirit, purpose. Not only has the true Church a place for every soul for whom Christ is the center of his faith, the object of his love, and the inspiration of his service; strictly speaking, such souls *are* the Church, judged by the one test of the will and intent of Christ himself. In them, as far as may be, the Incarnation is extended. By them Christ enters more fully into the life of the world. Through them the power of the Adversary is a little more undermined. What matters the rest of it, except in so far as it is subservient to this high end? If it be not subservient, it becomes but so much blaring of bugles and tinkling of gongs, sound and fury signifying nothing. According to the fancy of a beloved poet, William Booth entered heaven to the martial strains of "Are You Washed in the Blood of the Lamb?" and as one who had never a doubt that he was, he trod, erect and unafraid, the golden highway straight to the Great White Throne. Was it not properly so? Had this man, who had rescued prostitutes from their brothels, and drunkards from their dens, and had set erring feet on the right path, and had put a new song of hope and purity and love in mouths that had known nothing but vileness of speech—had this man no right to the acclaim of heaven because, according to the standards of a pharisaic ecclesiasticism, he was "outside the Church"?

Outside of what church, forsooth? Are we to suppose that the Lord of Glory looked with disdain on the not-too-conventional William Booth, who brought nothing with him but an indomitable courage and an exultant faith and a consuming zeal, and, for credentials, if more were needed, an endless procession of redeemed souls, and that this same Lord placed a many-starred crown on the head of, shall we say, Pope John XII, and bade him be seated near the throne, because he brought with him credentials that were unmistakably and impeccably correct? Does anyone who really understands the New Testament suppose for a single moment that the excommunicating of Alfred Loisy, as a consequence of what he himself called his "duel with the Vatican," had the least effect upon his personal relation to Christ, by which alone a soul's place in the realm of the redeemed is determined?

These words are not written in bitterness. They are written only

to call attention to the things that really matter. The state of the world today being what it is, nine tenths of the solemn discussions which take place when Christian bodies cautiously purpose to "explore" the possibilities of "organic union" could very well be dispensed with. What did Nero care that Rome was burning, so long as he could drunkenly play his fiddle? Nobody will suggest for a moment that the Christian forces of our time do not need to get together. But what do we mean by "Christian forces," and what do we mean by "getting together"? Is a theory of the Church's constitution to be treated as a matter of greater importance than the bringing to bear upon the complex life of the world the impact of the mind of Christ? Do two moribund churches become one dynamic church by the simple device of swallowing each other up? If we cannot "get together" in theory, surely we can in practice; and if we do it in practice, either the theoretical will come of itself or it will not greatly matter that it does not.

Ecclesiastically speaking, Father Damien, Wilfred Grenfell, Mildred Cable, and Albert Schweitzer are far enough apart. Did it ever occur to the lepers of Molokai, or the fishermen of Labrador, or the nomads of the Gobi desert, or the victims of tropical diseases at Lambaréné, "on the edge of the forest primeval," to raise the question of these ecclesiastical differences? If the question was raised at all, it was not by needy souls but by ecclesiastics! As a matter of fact, the most eloquent and unanswerable defense of a medical missionary ever written was by Robert Louis Stevenson, a man of simple enough faith, in behalf of Father Damien, the Catholic priest, and it was written as the crushing and never-to-be-forgotten reply to an accusation against Damien as "coarse, dirty, impure," made by a Protestant missionary ("of my own sect," says Stevenson) in Honolulu.

No! a dying world is not to be saved by labels and uniforms and neat formulas. The thing that Jesus cared least about, his Church would better care least about if it is to bring him to his crowning in the deliverance of men from the toils of the Adversary. That Christian service needs guidance and direction lest it be futilely dissipated goes without saying. That there must be worship and prayer and confession and instruction and "the fellowship of kindred minds" for the quickening of devotion and the empowerment of life and the deepening of love and the cleansing and re-

leasing of the springs of feeling, no one will dispute. The Church must nourish itself if it is to be strong. But the one thing it must not do is to regiment the expression of its faith. The one truth about which there can be no dispute is that God is against evil in every shape and form, and that he regards as evil everything that restricts and cripples and degrades human life, and that the life he wills for every man is such a life as comes of the personal appropriation of Jesus Christ, and that to exemplify and promulgate and nurture this life in every possible way is the obligation upon the church—which is to say, the obligation laid upon every man who can in all sincerity say that Christ is his Lord. What Christian anywhere would dare to deny that?

But if that is so, then it will follow that the Church will be much more "like a mighty army" characterized by all manner of differences in constitution and procedures than like a huge impersonal mechanism which can never deviate form the prescribed path. We are a little suspicious of military metaphors today, but we do not need to be, seeing that there is nothing the Church more manifestly exists to do than to fight the enemy of human good. The Church in any proper sense carries on the function of creativity in the face of a destructive discreativity. Christ was the Creator's supreme achievement in the struggle with the Adversary. In Christ the Word became flesh, and must go on becoming flesh as the only way in which the purpose of the incarnation of the Son of God can be fulfilled. The Adversary is forever devising new ways and means, and he must be met and opposed wherever he elects to stand. New times bring new manners even in the Christian warfare. The Church is always in danger of attacking the Adversary with great vigor where he is not, and of failing to attack him where he actually is. The line of battle shifts, but all too often, safe but impotent on the abandoned line of battle, valiant "soldiers of the cross," courageous as Don Quixote, let loose their weaponry against nonexistent or imaginary foes!

The rampant evil of the world must be met wherever it shows its head. The struggle is a life-and-death struggle. The supposition of "inevitable progress" bears the Adversary's own imprint. It is inevitable that science will go on concocting new devices; what is not inevitable is that these devices will be used for binding men together in a mutuality of service and good will. We too often

forget that each new generation brings with it the self-centeredness that characterized its predecessors. The utmost refinements of "eugenic breeding" will not breed out of human beings its heritage from the jungle. Men of perfect physique and high intellectuality are as capable of evil motives, evil purposes, and evil ways as are cripples and dullards—even more so. "Salvation must come to men from without," no matter what "advantages" these men may enjoy in respect of comforts and conveniences. Sin corrupts on both sides of the railway track. It flourishes among communists and capitalists alike. It lurks equally "on the Drive" and "in the alley."

What "progress" is made in respect of the things of the spirit must be fought for. It will not come of itself, and neither will it come as the result of some automatic smooth-working impersonal law. Every means that makes possible a new triumph of creativity is a possible instrument of a more devastating discreativity. The struggle of good and evil goes to the roots of things, and if good ceases to be vigilant it is vanquished. A cheap optimism has no warrant in history nor in individual experience, because it has no warrant in human nature. Life tends to lethargy, and it has to be prodded into action, either by an outward threat or by an inward necessity.

These are so many considerations for the Church, both as a specific organization and as that body of men and women the world over who through Jesus Christ have learned the secret of peace and power. The Church as organized is often hampered by its very organization, but the individual Christian can always act as a free man. No one wants to disband the organization; it is its own sufficient justification, all its limitations notwithstanding. Its collective weight, constructively applied, has nowhere a moral and social equivalent. But it tends to conform to type, whereas what the world greatly needs today is an outbreak of Christian irregularity. It is not that the regularity is to be shattered: that would be fatal; but the supplementing of the regulars by the irregulars is an essential of the modern Christian warfare.

The Church as organized may hesitate to take a definite stand on certain debatable social and political issues, but no such caution on the part of the organized Church can bind the thought and action of the individual. Membership in the Church does not deprive the Christian of his right to be a free lance, that is to say, to bear

his witness in any situation, and to strike a blow against evil wherever he may meet it. The only "orders" which the Church has the right to give any member is the *general* order to "fight the good fight of faith." But how he shall fight, where he shall fight, what he shall fight—all this must be a matter for his own determination. Any Christian will find himself confronted with the Adversary in a score of ways every day he lives, and he has just one obligation: to smite him wherever the opportunity offers.

This irregularity is also to be expected, and even encouraged, at the point of *individual experience*. It is no more reasonable to regiment the inner life than the outward activity. The very contradictions of which men are the natural center are so many guarantees of Christian differences. Much has been written in the preceding pages about the significance of Jesus Christ, both in respect of his relation to the Creator and in respect of his relation to the creative conflict as it issues in man and man's problem. But it has not been written as so much dogmatism: it has been written as one man's understanding of the complex web of existence and of how the web takes on a pattern when it is viewed from the standpoint of what is disclosed in Jesus Christ. Other men may arrive at a different understanding; that does not greatly matter so long as they find in Christ their clue. It is hardly to be expected that, say, a Paul and a James, a Tertullian and an Origen, a Bernard and an Abélard, an Occam and a Boehme, a Luther and an Erasmus, an Edwards and a Bushnell, a Dale and a Martineau, a Kierkegaard and a Martensen, a Barth and a Maritain, will run their Christian experience in the same mold. Are there not many members in one body, and does not the body need each member? The eye is not the hand, yet how greatly is the hand limited if there be no eye to guide it! "There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are diversities of ministrations, and the same Lord. And there are diversities of workings, but the same God, who worketh all things in all." (I Cor. 12:4-6, A.S.V.)

There are the quiet in the land, and they have their place. But there are also the great tormented souls, and they too have their place. The intellectual precisionist is likely to regard these tormented souls as somewhat off center. Perhaps they are closer to the *real* center than their critics suspect. The center for any man is where he stands with the greatest feeling of confidence. The tor-

mented souls have their agonizings. They know what it means to have hell break loose within them, but the man whose face is that of one who has been in hell will at least bear witness to others how real hell may be. "Pathological" he may be called, but an adjective is a cheap price to pay for the secret he possesses.

Actually, the so-called pathological may be much nearer the robust health that brings eternal life, much more firmly held in the irregular and unpredictable sweep of the orbit they follow, than the smug, selfsatisfied, urbane, smooth-tongued, meticulous, logic-chopping Pharisees who never had a profound moral qualm in all their life, never blanched with horror when they looked into their own hearts, never saw anything but the most admirable consistency in their cold willingness to smash a life rather than depart by a hair's breadth from one of their precious regulations, never cried in the moral throes engendered of the vision of the holy God, "Woe is me!" never cried as the threatening waves moved upon them, "Lord, save me, or I perish!" never cried, with a voice all muffled by reason of a downcast head, "God be merciful to me a sinner!" Surely the twice-born are not less authentic witnesses of the things of God than the barely-born!

Let us not hesitate to say it, and let us not hesitate to call upon the Church to recognize it: the men who have ascended nearest to heaven are the men who have descended most deeply into the hell of moral torment. These are the true Samson Agonistes. They are the Jacobs who wrestle at Jabbok; the Moses-men who cannot look upon God; the Amoses who are driven from their flocks and orchards to stand as living witnesses by the altars of shame; the Ezekiels who lie in the dust of humiliation, awaiting the command, "Stand upon thy feet, and I will speak unto thee"; the psalmists who cry out of the depths, who remember God and are disquieted, who are so troubled that they cannot speak; the Peters who go weeping bitterly out of the place of their denial; the Sauls whose eyes are blinded under the sudden confrontation of the unendurable truth of Christ. They are the Tertullians and the Wycliffes, the Waldos and the Luthers, the Calvins and the Judsons. They are the Pascals who cry "Fire! God of Abraham, God of Isaac, God of Jacob, not of the philosophers, not of the scholars! Certitude! Certitude! Feeling! Joy! Peace! Jesus Christ! Renunciation, total and sweet!" And they are the Kierkegaards whose very reason

staggers and threatens to go into eclipse as they see their distraught souls being contended for by the Creator who would save and the Adversary who would destroy.

These are the men who leaven the lump. These are the light set on the stand. These are the salt to prevent decay. There may be, and are, those who are leaven, light, salt, in a different way from these; but these are saving instrumentalities nevertheless. It is the salvation of the world from its selfishness and sin that is their one passion: nothing else matters save as it serves this end.

And how we need them today! Not the Epicureans! Not the Protagorases! Not the men with the yardstick whose length they have themselves determined, and who talk of "standards" when they really mean "personal dicta." Not the dilettante intellectualists who lounge in their comfortable clubs and, while the devil is most manifestly in the saddle and riding mankind hard toward the pit of destruction, airily announce that there is no devil and no pit, and that man is his own master if he will be, seeing that he is only one level lower than God and will reach even the higher level, give him but time. Not these are our guides. One Wesley, one Moody, one Drummond, one Kagawa, one Redwood, is worth all of them put together if what is at issue is the need of the world to be made once again overwhelmingly aware of God, in particular of God as self-disclosed in Jesus Christ. The lost ask for more than guides who are themselves lost. Those who sit in the shadow of darkness have little hope of light from those who sit in an even blacker shadow. Their hope lies rather in the few who having been in the darkness, saw the shining of a great light, and knew that there was a way to follow, and what the way was.

Surely such men are of the Church, called by whatever name they may be. Surely it is not beyond the reach of possibility that the Church shall continue to produce such men and to let them loose upon the world. If they must be unconventional, let them be unconventional. If they are one-sided in their zeal, let them be one-sided. If, having been duly "briefed," they carry out their mission in their own way, does it matter so long as the mission is fulfilled?

Why this passion for propriety? Why this fear of the audacious? "Damien went to Molokai without orders," complained the Honolulu clergyman, who took precious good care to see to it that he got no orders to go there himself! On that complaint Stevenson

wrote the memorable comment: "Do you really mean the words for blame? I have heard Christ, in the pulpits of our Church, held up for imitation on the ground that his sacrifice was voluntary! . . . Damien shut to with his own hand the doors of his own sepulcher." It was a question for a while whether a mission board would approve even Albert Schweitzer, for "fear of his radical scholarship"! A "radical" indeed he was, a curiously Christian radical, enough of a radical to turn his back upon his beloved library and his even more beloved organ, and betake himself to French Equatorial Africa to do there what one man could "to make atonement to the black races of that continent for all the nameless horror they had endured at the hands of representatives of the Christian white races of the world"! In the final accounting of souls at that bar where no mistakes are made, such a clamor of voices will arise to attest the utter selflessness of Albert Schweitzer that the timid whisper of one anxious literalist, "but he was an eschatologist," will not even be heard! Verily, the fools—they are the wise! The weak—they are the strong! The broken—they are the healed! The blinded—they have the vision! The tormented—they have the peace! The tumultuous—they have the calm confidence of the unafraid!

The Church has marching orders, and not a single follower of Christ can escape them. A Voice cries "Forward!" and an outstretched Hand points the way. Long since, the Voice earned the right to utter that cry; it earned it in that dark hour when it agonizingly whispered: "If it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt." Long since the Hand earned the right to point to those dangerous heights where the Adversary is so strongly entrenched; the print of the nail is its unchallengeable authentication. He who has heard that Voice and marked that outstretched Hand cannot take his ease in a comfortable tent. Or if he does, he is likely someday to hear whatever may be the Christian equivalent of the reputed message of a French king to one of his captains: "Go, hang yourself, brave Crillon! We fought at Arques, and you were not there!"

We fought, and you were not there. What an indictment is that of one who appears all girded for battle, but leaves his weapons unused as brave ornaments for his peaceful walls! We fought for justice for little children whose days bade fair to be spent in dark-

some alleys—and you were not there. We fought for the rights of men who must earn their bread—and often ours!—in the sweat of their brow, and under conditions dangerous and drab—and you were not there. We fought for schools as good for the sons and daughters of the poor as for the sons and daughters of the rich—and you were not there. We fought for the undernourished throngs of homeless refugees, victims of the mad ambitions of those who ruled them—and you were not there. We fought for restraints upon those who would corrupt the taste and destroy the sense of decency of those whom they could persuade to gaze upon their gaudy obscenities and shamelessly drink their hellish brews—and you were not there. We fought for the right of men to hear the truth, whether through the printed page, or from the rostrum, or over the air—and you were not there. We fought for the right of small nations to be freed from fear of the evil designs of more powerful nations—and you were not there. We fought against the corruption of courts, and the determination of punishment according to the color of the prisoner's skin, or his place on the social ladder, or his influence with the party in power—and you were not there. We fought to break down the barriers that keep men apart, barriers of race, barriers of caste, barriers of creed, barriers of tradition—and you were not there. What an indictment is that! Go, hang yourself, brave Christian, indeed!

But why should a man so fight? Because that is much of what life is all about. Because to say "Peace!" when there is no peace is to let loose the deluge. Because that is what God is chiefly interested in. Because that is what Jesus Christ came into the world to get done. Because that is the form which the creative conflict in our day is manifestly assuming. Because no man who is indifferent at points like these can possibly be regarded as enrolled under the banner of Christ.

Too often we forget our Lord's own ministry among men. We rightly enough declare that the Church is called to proclaim and exemplify the Gospel, but have we fully understood what this Gospel is? The Gospel is no more to be confined to theological definitions than the Church is to be confined to set organizations. The Gospel overflows every definition just as certainly and just as inevitably as the Church overflows every organization. "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abun-

dantly." So said Jesus, and it belongs to us to inquire what he meant by abundant life. How better can we tell than by considering the record of his own days among men? Too often when we do this we pass over some of his most characteristic sayings as "too hard," or we pass over his "mighty works." We evade their force by the simple device of affirming the incredibility of miracles. But the record continues to haunt us, our sophistication notwithstanding. We cannot quite escape the uncomfortable feeling that these "mighty works" may have some significance after all. Can it be that what they signify is as much a part of "the simple Gospel" as are his most kindly sayings? Can it be that what "mighty works" were *directed against* was a form of evil whose continued presence in the world is so far forth a sign of the Adversary's activity and a challenge to the Creator and his Kingdom?

Then what were they directed against? They were directed against pain, against disease, against maimed bodies, against hunger, against the griefs that are born of these evils, and even, on occasion, against death itself. For Jesus all these were the evidences not of the will of God but of the denial of his will. They bespoke the reign of that "strong man" whom he himself said he must first bind before he could despoil. Abolish the miracles if you think you must, but at least do not abolish what they *mean*. They mean that there is no complacency in high heaven over the spectacle of broken bodies, and defective minds, and maimed limbs. They mean that the Church of Christ is committed by the example of her Lord to an unrelenting attack upon hunger and the causes thereof, and upon disease and the causes thereof, and upon dementia and the causes thereof. These are not so many things that God *wants*, so many evidences of his displeasure, so many forms of his discipline for men. Rather is he against them, and he fought them, as he did in Christ, as an evidence of his real will and purpose.

When the Roman Catholic Church or any other church puts a statue of Christ in front of a hospital, it does what it should. Schools that fight ignorance, libraries that fight superstition, orphanages that fight handicaps, old folks homes that fight destitution, sanatoria that fight disease—all these are weaponries of creative love for those who have eyes to see. They are properly included in the vast sweep of that "good news" which was announced one day to astonished listeners in the synagogue at Nazareth. The life that Jesus Christ

came to make possible for men was life from which all evil was banished, or in so far as it must still remain, become transmuted into that very good which evil sought to destroy.

Not that this is the whole story. What is being contended for is that that story—the story of human redemption—is not complete which leaves this out. Too long has the Church rested in the supposition that its mission is "exclusively spiritual." That it fulfills its complete responsibility only as it seeks to bring every human soul to sonship to God, this is the simple truth. Herein is the ultimate aim of its marching orders. Missions—yes! Evangelism—yes! Soul-winning—yes! But these are not activities to be carried on in complete indifference to the human situation. Life is too complex to permit of one of its interests—even the supreme interest of the soul's eternal salvation—being entirely separated from all else.

The call is to mortal combat. The militant metaphor is justified by the very nature of the case. Redemption involves destruction, the destruction of that Destruction whose evidences are everywhere visible. In the Age of Chivalry, the "carpet knight" was the butt of many a derisive sneer:

> His best boast is but to wear
> A braid of his fair lady's hair!

He never exposed his pampered form to any fierce enemy

> Whose desperate grasp his frame might feel
> Through bars of brass and triple steel.

He kept his armor bright and shining and free from unsightly dents —truly a sight to behold as he rode magnificently along to some secluded arbor of dalliance! But it was never said of him that he felt under his foot the writhing of the vanquished beast,

> Kept quiet like the snake 'neath Michal's foot
> Who stands calm just because he feels it writhe.

Such conquest was costly even in the realm of imagination. Much more is it costly in the realm of actuality, where alone the men who follow Christ can fully keep their vows. The Christian man in whose armor is no dent has been more than careful in his choice of a foe! The Church too. "The fiery darts of the Evil One" will

not always be caught on the shield and turned harmlessly aside. The one thing that is certain is that if we fight evil we shall receive wounds, and if we bear no scars we may well question our courage.

There is a reason why the central symbol of the Christian faith is a cross. The cross stands for self-giving in the name of love to deliver men from the power of evil. It is thus that God always gives himself. It is thus that God gave himself supremely in the life and death of his Son. Only thus can those who themselves have known deliverance work effectively for the deliverance of others. Paul declared that he "preached Christ and him crucified." But what was the manner of his preaching? Surely not only in what he wrote and said, but also in all that sacrificial action and experience which is so graphically summarized in II Cor. 11:23-31, which in turn is all gathered up in one simple assertion, "I die daily" (I Cor. 15:31).

The mere assertion of the Cross may leave men utterly unmoved. If the extension of the Incarnation is the Church, and if the Incarnation includes the Cross, then only where the Cross is re-enacted, not as a mere spectacle but as a living reality in life itself, is the Incarnation truly extended. In Christ "the Word became flesh," and what was the Cross but a part of that divine experience? The Word was not completely flesh until it had shown in the flesh all the wonder of divine love and grace. Where was that if not at the Cross? If it may be so said, *the Cross must become flesh* before its redeeming power can be fully revealed. How else can it become flesh save in living men who consent, here and now, in this twentieth century, in the midst of this present evil world, to be "crucified with Christ?"

The symbolism of the Cross is impotent save as it is concretely actualized. George Bernard Shaw, as he is wont to do, puts his finger exactly on the spot when he makes the death of Joan of Arc the means of the salvation of the heartless chaplain who had clamored for her destruction. When it was all over, he was lashed with inner torments, and literally screamed in agony at the sight of the pathetic cinder. Years afterward, a changed man, he used to declare that what saved and redeemed him was this spectacle of a saint being done to death because she was a saint. It was when the Cross was relayed to the immediate present by a personal exemplification of its innermost meaning that a priest who had groveled before a

thousand *crosses* saw and felt and accepted and repeated *the* Cross.

Which thing is a parable needing no interpretation even for the simplest.

A final reminder is, however, necessary. Virtue goes out of the militant Church, and it cannot give out virtue indefinitely unless it knows incessant renewal. The medieval knight went from his chapel to the battlefield. The law of all life is rhythm: action alternates with rest. The crusading Church cannot be forever crusading. It fights the better for ceasing awhile from the fighting to gather new strength through worship, meditation, prayer, communion. Those are right who today are emphasizing the corporate life of the Church, and the need of maintaining the vitality of the whole in order to keep vitality in the parts. There can be no such thing as Christian atomism. What was written above about the freedom of action of the individual Christian was not intended to suggest that he had no need of the Christian fellowship. Evil may leave its black mark even on those who fight against it most manfully, and they need to resort to the fountain of cleansing. Many a wound is received in this Christian warfare, and there is need of a place of healing.

The Church worshiping is not one thing and the Church militant another. The worshipfulness and the militancy are the reciprocal movements of one and the same Church. We contemplate the Cross first to yield to it and then to incarnate it. But this Cross—what is it but the supreme grapple of love with hate, of the creative with the discreative, of the elemental life with the elemental death, better still, of the Creator who would give all that good may increase and prevail and the Adversary to whom all good is hateful, and who knows nothing but destruction. God endured that Cross in order to create the Church, defined as the "Fellowship of the Cross," and how can there be any participation in that fellowship save by the personal acceptance of its own law, an acceptance unanswerably authenticated in the concrete actualities of human service.

And they answered, "Lord, when saw we thee hungry, or thirsty, or homeless, or naked, or sick, or in bonds?" And the King replied, "You saw me every time you saw human need, and what you then did or did not, you did or did not to me. *That need was my need, for that needy man was I.*"

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